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## **SERMONS FOR THE TIMES**



# SERMONS FOR THE TIMES

*By Present-Day Preachers*

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Edited by  
REV. PETER WALKER

With Introduction  
By THOMAS L. MASSON

*Per.*



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## GOOD FRIENDS, TAKE NOTICE!

**T**HIS book is a messenger of Peace, Good Will and Love. It is the next best thing to going to church. It is very much like going to church in your own home. It links you up with God. And there is nothing greater in this world than to be linked up with God.

The thoughts in this book are the spoken thoughts of some of the best men now living. They have been gathered together in this form in order that you may reap the benefit.

The truth is, my friends, that the world is getting smaller all the time. Men all over the world are being drawn closer together. There was a time when we didn't know much about the Chinese or the Japanese. We were almost afraid of them. Now we know they are our brothers. After the earthquake in Tokio, when so many thousands of human beings were destroyed, millions of American money poured in to help them. They would have done the same for us.

And along with this close-up of all the peoples of the world is coming another great fact. It is beginning to be understood more and more that book learning doesn't make so much difference, that inventions don't make so much difference, that all



the machinery in this world, as necessary as this machinery is to carry the world along, don't make so much difference, as does the great fact that we are all brothers.

Not long ago one of the most learned men in this country died. He had studied all his life. He was a great orator. Yet when he died it was said of him that the prayer that he repeated every night and morning was "Now I lay me down to sleep." It is coming home to all of us that unless we keep ourselves as little children, we may not enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

It is also coming home to us that the Kingdom of Heaven is here and now. One of the greatest things that Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ said was: "Before Abraham was, I am." He meant that life is eternal, and that, as we enter into the Kingdom with Him, this links us up with eternity and God, and that we always were with Him and always will be.

Sometimes, when we look about us and see all the beautiful things in the world, when we see pictures of yachts, and fine houses and temples and palaces, and indeed all of the material elegances which so many hands have toiled to make, we are apt to be fooled by the thought that these things are not for us. Don't let this deceive you for a moment. The world we see before us is changing all the time. Houses are decaying, automobiles are wearing out, yachts are corroding, temples and

palaces are falling and mortal men are being carried off to their graves.

But children are being born, and mothers are holding those children to their breasts. Love goes on. Hatred and Fear are constantly shifting their base and flying before Love and Loyalty.

And over all and through all God lives. When we think of God, as we ought to do all of the time, we draw God to us. The infinite power of Christ cleans us of sin and makes us fit to live with God. I have read most of the great books in the world. I have talked and argued with many of the greatest men. I have traveled around the world. And my own conclusion is that nothing matters but God, and that it is only through the Spirit of Christ that we can be linked up with God.

This book is a friendly messenger that points the way.

THOMAS L. MASSON.

GLEN RIDGE, N. J.



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# I

## A GREAT PEACE CONFERENCE

DAVID JAMES BURRELL, D. D.

*"And behold a voice out of the cloud saying, This is my beloved Son . . . hear ye him."*—MATTHEW 17:5.

**A**T the first reading of the Declaration of Independence in the Continental Congress some one is said to have remarked: "Gentlemen, if we sign that document we must hang together." Whereupon another said: "If we don't, we shall hang separately." In these two observations all social philosophy is briefly summed up.

The world must get together if ever there is to be a Golden Age. It has been trying to get together ever since its first falling out in the Garden of Eden. The original Peace Conference was held outside the Garden gate where, after an outbreak of bloody violence, our first parents and their family gathered about an altar in the hope of making peace; and Peace Conferences have been going on at intervals from then until now. Wars (which are simply killings like that of Abel by Cain, only on a larger scale) have always been followed by such assemblies as those which were held at Ver-

sailles and Geneva, for the framing of international treaties in the interest of peace.

The same is true of ecclesiastical councils for the bringing together of the denominations of the Christian Church. At intervals ever since the Council in Jerusalem in the year 51 A. D., these have been going on. And what is there to show for them? Confusion worse confounded! There never has been a time when the nations were further apart than now, nor when the Church was apparently so rent by cross purposes as at the present hour.

What is the trouble and what is the reason for it? Let us go to Mount Tabor, where possibly we may find out.

In the story of the Transfiguration of Jesus we have an account of the most important Peace Conference ever held. Its minutes have been handed down by three confidential scribes; Matthew, Mark and Luke, by whom it appears that the order of proceedings was as follows:

(1) *The Meeting was Opened with Prayer:*

Surely a right beginning. Observe the President of the Council on his knees; "And it came to pass that Jesus took with him Peter and John and James and went up into the mountain to pray." And as He prayed the expected happened; "The fashion of his countenance was changed and his raiment became white and dazzling."

Many a man enters the trysting place with a melancholy face, and clad in sackcloth to be thus transfigured by communion with the Infinite! "Enter into thy closet and shut to the door," my friend,—shutting out the world and shutting thyself in with God,—and see what thou shalt see!

Is this the Wayfarer in homespun who, an hour ago, climbed the mountain with staff in hand? Behold Him now in garments white and glistening, ready to lead the Councils of the waiting world to a righteous and perpetual peace.

(2) *Enter, the Delegates:*

Here are Moses, the great Lawgiver who had been dead fifteen hundred years, and Elijah, the Dean of the ancient Schools of the Prophets, who went up to Heaven five hundred years later in a chariot of fire. They lived far apart on earth, but in Heaven they had come together as yokefellows in a common cause.

(3) *The Conference Begins:*

"And they spake of the decease which Jesus was presently to accomplish at Jerusalem." The business in hand was the problem of ultimate peace on earth; and that problem could only be solved under the shadow of the Cross. For this reason the impending decease of Jesus, around which revolved this first Conference, must be regarded, not only as the central fact in history but as the



supreme and ultimate factor in the solution of the problem of good will among men.

(4) *The Audience Nods.*

By the minutes it appears that Peter and they that were with him "were heavy with sleep." Other worshippers have been known to be drowsy during the long prayer or under a dull sermon; but these men were stupefied by the amazing things that were happening before their eyes. They were presently awakened by the sound of voices and a singular light: and behold, the face of Jesus was "as the sun shineth in his strength" and his homespun garments were "white and glistening as no fuller on earth could white them." The disciples seem to have recognized intuitively the two that were with Him as Moses and Elijah. Dazed and bewildered, what could they say? Nothing! Silence is golden in such presences. "Be still and know that I am God!" Those who are transported to the Third Heaven always come back with their fingers on their lips.

(5) *Peter Speaks Up.*

Always ready in season and out of season, Peter speaks: "Lord, it is good for us to be here: let us make three tabernacles, one for thee and one for Moses and one for Elijah." Of what was he thinking? Was it, perhaps, of the three Athenian centers of learning—The Grove, the Academy and

the Painted Porch—the three Schools of Philosophy which were then dominating the wisdom of the world and promising to bring in the Golden Age? In any case he spake unadvisedly with his lips, not an unusual thing for Peter to do, as it is written, “he knew not what he said.”

(6) *The Answer.*

The answer was a startling one: “While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them.” This was no common cloud: it was the ancient Shekinah, in which the God of Israel had revealed His presence and by which He guided His chosen people on their way to the Land of Promise. And out of the luminous cloud there came a Voice—the same that was heard in Paradise when the Lord walked with Adam in the cool of the day; the same that spake to Moses in Midian out of the burning bush; the same that was heard in Sinai like “the sound of a trumpet waxing louder and louder”—and the Voice said, “This is my beloved Son; hear ye him!” Whereupon the disciples were afraid and fell upon their faces, in the presence of a majesty too overwhelming for the sight and hearing of mortal men.

(7) *Jesus Only.*

“And when they lifted up their eyes they saw no man save Jesus only.”

Here is the answer of High Heaven to all Con-

ferences that contemplate the peace of the world. "Peace, peace, but there is no peace;" nor ever will be until *Jesus only* as the Prince of Peace is enshrined in the hearts of nations and the children of men. The mistake of Peter is the mistake of all diplomatists, who have overlooked the sole and undivided sovereignty of the only begotten and well beloved Son of God.

One Tabernacle for the Law? Why not? Is it not written "The law is good"? Yes, and it is also written, "By the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified." Everything to its appointed end. "By the law cometh the knowledge of sin;" and thus the law, through repentance, becomes "a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ," whose blood, by faith, "cleanseth from all sin."

A Tabernacle for Doctrine, as set forth in the schools of the prophets? Why not? Truth is not to be valued with the gold of Ophir, since "as a man thinketh in his heart so is he." It is only invertebrates who cry out against creeds. The butcher, the baker and the candlestick-maker are trusted only so far as they believe in the underlying principles of trade. But an intellectual apprehension of truth can produce no more than a skin-deep piety. It can whiten a sepulchre but not quicken the dead. Is is as honest as policy, but no more. It can put a man into the pulpit, but not force him to speak the truth out of the abundance of his heart. A creed is like a bank-

note, good only for what is back of it and for what it can do. Its possessor cannot eat it, but he can eat the bread which he buys with it. Our profession of Christ must be tested in the same way, as He said: "Except ye eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of man ye have no life in you": that is: "Except you digest and assimilate your profession of faith and transmute it into nerve and sinew and mental strength and character and usefulness—precisely as you do common food—your Christianity is not life but a mere galvanic semblance of life." A creed on parchment, a Bible on the shelf, a prayer in a prayer-book, a Eucharist on an altar,—however devoted we may be to them as objective facts, are no better than fetiches unless they penetrate the inmost recesses of the heart and manifest themselves in the common duties of life.

A Tabernacle for Jesus? Why not? Yes, but never as one of three! He has no peers. "In Him ye ben fylded." In the Church as His only Tabernacle are combined the law and the prophets and the Gospel of Grace. Moses and Elias give way to Jesus who stands alone as "first, last, midst and all in all."

And down through the centuries comes the Voice out of the cloud, "This is my beloved Son; *hear ye him!*" All voices from within are silenced. Those who make the inner consciousness their court of final jurisdiction as to truth and right-

eousness are clearly at issue with the teaching of Christ. And by the same token all outward voices are silenced. Those who follow the crowd, farming out their convictions to public opinion or allowing any mortal man, pope or presbytery to do their thinking for them are not serving Christ but Antichrist. There is only one Prophet, Priest and King in God's Commonwealth; and there is none other beside Him.

It took Peter a long while to fully recover from his mistake on Mount Tabor; but that he *did* learn his lesson is evident from what he wrote thirty years later in one of his general epistles: "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables," he says, "when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ; but we were eye-witnesses of his majesty; when we were with him in the holy mount: for he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him 'This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased,'" (II Pet. 1:16).

What then is the conclusion of the whole matter? "Back to Christ!" By all the failures of all the peace conferences that have been held in the tabernacles of Moses and Elias, let the Church and the world confess its need of Jesus only. It is not enough, however, to say "Let us get back to Christ," unless we know what Christ is meant. "For many shall say Lo, here is Christ or Lo there; but believe them not." There is only one

Christ, to wit, the beloved Son of God. To set up a Christ who was less than his claims, or to minimize His supreme authority as to salvation, the trustworthiness of Scripture or anything else, is merely to set up a golden calf on the altar of Jehovah with the cry, "These be thy gods, O Israel." There is no middle ground. Christ is all or nothing. For a Christian all conferences end with a vision of Jesus only.

In the faith of that vision the Church—the great invisible *ecclesia*,—made up of members whose names are recorded in the Lamb's book of life—is and forever must be one. The line need not be drawn; it is drawn already. "The Lord knoweth them that are his."

The time is coming when the tares and wheat will no more grow together in the visible Church; when there shall be "one fold and one shepherd." In that day the sheep of the fold will all follow the Shepherd, as Jesus said, "My sheep know my voice and they follow me."

Then shall John's vision come true; "I was in the spirit on the Lord's day; and I saw the tabernacle of God coming down among men;—and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them and be their God."

## II

### "THAT YOUR LOVE MAY ABOUND"

SAMUEL PARKES CADMAN, D. D.

*"And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment: that ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ; being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God."*—I PHILIPPIANS 9:11.

**S**T. PAUL'S letter to the Philippians is full of hidden treasures within the reach of every one who seeks them in the spirit of the Master. It was penned by the most vital and mobile character Christianity has produced, and the pulsations of his heart are felt in every line of the document. The larger scale and variety of matter of his great letters to Rome and Corinth make comparison with them unnecessary. But of those which reflect his personality, and his conceptions of the Christian life and ministry, the Philippian letter takes the foremost place. It is more tranquil than Galatians; more tender than Ephesians, more irenic than Colossians, more symmetrical than Thessalonians, and more comprehensive than the messages to Timothy, Titus and Philemon. Living in the love which surpassed knowledge; resting and toiling in

the peace which is superior to every device and counsel of men, the Apostle relates the things that had happened to him, with the joyful confidence that they are for the furtherance of the Gospel.

He suggests that a crisis in his appeal from the Jewish Procurator to Rome's tribunal is at hand. He is uncertain whether the decision will bring him liberty for further evangelization or sudden death. Earthly prospects neither allure nor dismay him. The fascinations of the life to come grow upon his imagination. His once impetuous nature is steadied by his vision of the unseen world. If, in his earlier writings and utterances, we detect the impatience of a resolute advocate chafed by opposing circumstances, here we find little except the elevation and serenity of a dedicated and mature mind. The tautology of earnestness is still noticeable. But thoughts and sentiments have ripened; a subtle fragrance is distilled from them; captivity of body has released the Apostle's magnificent powers for a fuller, richer service than was possible in the crowded days of his missionary activity. He reveals his inmost longings and aspirations in language of camera-like fidelity, which gives permanent expression to the deepest realities of his life. The Philippians were absent in the flesh, but present in the spirit, sharing his captivity, tarrying with him in "his own hired house," communing with their revered and beloved teacher, while the soldier who guarded him sat at his side.



He bares his soul's recesses to them because they exhibited the constancy which is the surest test of individual worth. Their oneness in sympathy and co-operation arouses his unmixed delight. They had made his temporal wants their particular care. Before the God in whose presence he stands, solitary, a prisoner, and nearing the headsman's axe, he renders thanks upon every remembrance of them. Remonstrance and warning are here, but pitched in a minor key; faith, hope and blessedness are the major themes. Its flow of emotion, its ethical restraint, its blending of mystic certitudes with basic principles and practical details, constitute this love letter of the Apostle the preeminent writing of Christian antiquity, in itself an unveiling of the founder of Western civilization.

Philippi was the first European city the Apostle visited, and it is easy to believe that his thoughts traveled beyond it into the mighty continent which was to be transformed by his message. Scarcely thirty years had elapsed since Jesus was crucified as a malefactor in an obscure province of the Empire; scarcely ten since Paul had told these converts the story of his Lord's cruel death. Yet they already showed a spiritual unity and culture which baffled the strongest social organization mankind has ever evolved. The unity and culture have survived, but the places where they were first developed have either vanished or sunk into decay. The churches which were foremost in the apostolic fel-

lowship and correspondence are no more. The metropolitan cities where Paul upraised the Cross are now as though they had never been. In some instances the Crescent of Islam has supplanted the Cross. Yet the names of these cities and places, and of the churches founded there, are household words in Christendom. They heard the first proclamation of divine love and wisdom in classic regions. They cannot perish because of their associations with an obscure Jewish tentmaker who was also an apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ and therefore God's magistrate for humanity. The secret of his authority is disclosed by our text. He says, in effect, "I speak of my prayers in your behalf: and this is what I pray: that your love, which is your recreated life, the soul's entire state and condition, the love of God in you and by you so entwined with the very being of Christ that He is its predominant partner, may yet more and more abound. But I would not have it diverted by mere impulse, or by the uprushes of spasmodic devotion. It is not that love of natural desire in which lingers the taint of self-inclination.

"It is the love of righteousness and of whatever makes for righteousness: the sovereign passion of the will and also of the conscience. Hence it must follow the courses its Author appoints; in comprehensive, organized knowledge; in the keen perceptiveness and delicate intuitions which such love alone can generate; in the perfect exercise of every

spiritual sensibility for distinguishing right from wrong. Let this holy flower of the celestial flame increase, and your motives will be as clear as noon-tide; your moral appraisements certify the things that excel. Those who observe your behaviour will find in it no occasion for stumbling; no alien elements will pollute your profession in word or deed. When, in the day of Christ judgment knocks at your door, it shall find you ready, eager, filled with the fruits of godly living. The harvests of beneficence that grow out of His regenerated order will then be yours to offer to the glory and praise of your redeeming God."

To every age of the Church, to none more than our own, the text reads a needful lesson. It recalls all believers from the waste of earthly strifes and the vagaries of theological quarrels to the religion of inwardness and freedom as it was revealed by our Lord. It reminds us that we are not at the mercy of traditions, however venerable; nor of external rules of doctrine or practice, however well entrenched. It emphasizes that historic Faith, conceived in Eternal Love, consummated in an Eternal Sacrifice, the centre and the life of which are in "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day and forever." Here is the meeting place of sects and creeds, the reconciliation of sincerely contending factions. As the sky overarches sea and land, so does this profound and moving prayer cover with its warmth and light the entire *ecclesia*. God's

evident favour streams from its fervent petitions upon the shortcomings as well as the achievements of his faithful children. It kindles their penitence and their praise; it casts them down that it may lift them up forever; it purges them of their dross to fit them for the holiest society. It is

The Love that gives to every power a double power  
Above their functions and their offices.

We share Paul's unfaltering confidence in its eventual triumph, and in that of the Gospel which it created. Its source, its manifestation, its experimental values, its record in the missionary operations of the Church, forbid us to doubt its future sovereignty. By it the veil has been taken off the face of many nations. It maintained Christian institutions and Christian literature in the empires of the Caesars and of Charles the Great. Its expulsive power moved Augustine to write his *City of God* at a time when Rome's fall shook the world. It inspired the eloquence of Chrysostom and of the three Gregories. It caused the Roman Pontificate to become the Citadel of the Faith for seven hundred years. It enabled Dante, Thomas Aquinas, Marsigli and Wyclif to perceive the defective relations of the Church with the political state. It dwelt in the Reformers who restored to the freedom of the believer and of prophecy their Apostolic meanings. It gave the Pilgrims the courage and fortitude by means of which they recast American

Protestantism as a creed of religious liberty. It drove Wesley out of the clerical Oxford into the moral wilderness of the eighteenth century that he might rescue nascent democracy from blasphemy and ruin. It despatched missionaries to the uttermost parts of the earth and by so doing, insured the perpetuity of our domestic churches.

These outstanding personalities and events challenged modern Christianity. It cannot plead ignorance of the triumphs of divine love operating in wisdom toward those who are without. Nor can it avoid the conclusion that the Church must be quickened, unified, enlarged on every side before she equals her own past and constrains society to fulfill the purpose of God. If she makes Paul's prayer her own, in so doing she assumes that the gifts it entreats are at her disposal. The assumption involves an unspeakable responsibility. Can she have, according to her faith, God's grace and guidance for the human race? Why, then, are they not in her to abound; to regenerate and equip her as the *alter ego* of her Lord; bearing in her body the marks of His sacred passion; informed in her every member with his life-giving strength? Such is the reasonable demand made upon us by saints and sinners alike. They ask that we shall do credit to our own principles, and furnish sufficient vehicles for the communication of a matchless ideal of life. As to whether the demand is met there are differences of opinion. Nor does the answer lie on the

surface of the situation. It is complex beyond the ordinary, and certainly it cannot be handled by opportunists who would lower the mysteries of divine grace to a naturalistic level. They may cling to the hard and fast distinction between what in religion is mystical and what rational, but they will not be the spiritual guides of this visible world. They may serve faith by protecting it against superstition. But the unfathomable might, the creative range, the incalculable supremacy of the love behind that faith, are not vivid to their apprehension.

Much that is fair and seemly in the modern learning is due to the valuable contributions of Christian thinkers and scholars. The pity is that the Shekinah of a love other and higher than our own does not always hover over its shrine. Doubtless Christianity is hospitably received by the majority. A few there are who patronize it with fatuous complacency. Fewer still, however, contend that there is nothing outside the universe of time and space. Hardly any venture to assert that our Lord's example and teaching should not universally prevail. It is generally conceded that the Church is an indispensable creation of God; that the Bible which she wrote and compiled covers nearly everything within the confines of man's existence.

The critical methods which place its light upon a golden candlestick have earned our gratitude. Every valid result of their enterprise is well worth

the cost of its acquirement. Yet the devout preacher and hearer of the Word query why it does not search the heart and conscience as it did in a less instructed age. We hunger for the Pentecost of heart which erudition, whether heterodox or orthodox, seems unable to invoke. Multitudes of our brethren concentrate their prayers upon the assembly. They inquire through it when the heavens will brighten and the Sun of Righteousness shine forth once more. They ask how long the Church they love must wait for the God who comes in mercy and in judgment to impart the religion of the text—uncreate, limitless, vivifying religion—free from every earthly stain, productive of its own theology and forms; giving to our Israel and to the Church Catholic their second spring.

Meanwhile we are not without auspicious omens. The pretensions of the temporal are thrown into too bold a relief to be acceptable to an intelligent morality. The Church is keen about ethical ideals, and their application in large realms of action. She was seldom more vigorous in denouncing wrong. There is a real anxiety for the essentials of the Faith, albeit with a zeal which sometimes outruns discretion. But when we crave the apocalypse of love which Paul unfolds before us because it was a fire in his bones, the present plight of nominally Christian nations demonstrates its absence. A barrenness no culture can remedy, characterizes much institutional religion.

The onpressing determination to build all things according to the pattern on the Mount has faltered in a moment of unprecedented pressure. These matters are with us, sleeping or waking, because the Puritan consciousness of God, though mocked and derided by the profane, gives us no peace till we find it in the doing of His will. If the type of religion we inherit were no more than a code of formulas, a discipline fenced about with ornate symbolism, we could retreat upon their mundane support.

But it was reborn in ancestors of the Pauline school who did not hesitate to enter within the cloud nor to claim their priesthood in the blaze of the eternal throne. Their trust was not in a mediating hierarchy, but in a mediating Redeemer; not in a creed nor in a book, but in a person and in a life. Upon them rested that ineffability which is the token of a mystical faith; and they transplanted it into a practice which in this land revolutionized church and state. Their lives shine on ours like a radiant path across a fog-bound ocean; a path for the elect to tread, leading straight into the City which hath foundations.

Having tasted of these powers of the world to come, we are not of those who turn back before the battle is won. But the winning of it will bring us into unexpected ways. The Christian obedient to the vision of Love is detached from the sensible world that he may contemplate it in the perspec-



tives of eternity and serve it from above. He will understand what Lucretius meant when he described the mountain-peak where the shouting and the tumult are lost in the silence reigning there, and the scouring legions on the plains below are apparently motionless. A similar elevation is the first outcome of our response to the Apostle's prayer. It raises us up to sit with the Lord of Love in heavenly places. The Church militant is in need of this communion with the "Holiest in the height."

From that vantage point she is assured that the temporal takes its determinate leap and vanishes. Yet heedless of this truth, nearly every phase of man's historic growth has been blinded by the fierce glare of visible things and our phase is not exempted. It seems incredible, in view of the last century and a half, that experts should suspect a decline in modern civilization. Nevertheless, they offer substantial reasons for the suspicion. One-half the knowledge gained they affirm is negligible; to what hellish uses the remainder can be put, we, ourselves, are witnesses. Madame Bisson recently plead with the Academy of France for a restitution of faith in the Unseen, since materialistic thought would incur further catastrophe. This impending doom is painted in the blackest colours by a trained observer of society, who insists that no self-analysis, no confession of wrong-doing, can stay the eclipse into which Christendom passes. Its inscrutable

dispensation is a genesis in itself, without fixed duration, for which neither East nor West has the reasoned knowledge required to explain it. References to the ritual of despair would be irrelevant did they not warn us against the sensational treatment of human experience. Its weird imaginations are foreign to the life which is hid with Christ in God. Those who harbour them are besieged by the "fears which have a thousand eyes to plague their beating hearts."


They aim at the actual and hit the fantastic. But believers in the divine order, knowing the worst, can labour for the best and leave the rest to God. Upon His threshing-floor the time spent is always winnowing the chaff from the grain. We are not to be entangled by the terrors or the fascinations of man's fleeting physical environment. Stress as much as you please the need for its betterment, for the spread of commerce, the adjustment of industrial disputes, the housing of the poor, the education of the people. Yet the servant of God who, from the mount of light, looks into love's perfect law of liberty, and continues therein, learns that not even the betterment of this changing world, but the vital union of all souls with the changeless goodness and holiness of God, is the primal duty of the Church. Their real citizenship is eternal: *in*, and not around them, the die is cast for peace or war, for progress or death.

Neither their praise nor blame nor any prophetic

word, closes man's case with his Maker. He alone knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust. He foresees in the strange duality of human nature and human life the final conquest of righteousness. The lover of God will share His will for His children. He will perceive that though "man is a reed he is a thinking reed," and that "all his dignity is in his consciousness."

The silent spaces of nature above, the absurdities and tragedies of existence beneath, the brutality of death cannot quench that consciousness. Let us abandon the lower levels which have no rational terminus, and convey our message to the hidden man of the heart if we would know the meaning of Christ's cry as he faced his ordeal: "*All souls are mine.*"

Thus far we have climbed the steep ascent of love's wisdom, its elevation of the whole being, its vision of the race. But constantly before this vision is the sacrificial ministry that love inspires; a ministry in which the highest life suffers with gladness for the sake of the lower life. Its eminence is the source of its compassion, of its sense of justice, of its constraint toward the good of others. No geographical boundaries interfere with its universal radius. Seeing Jesus as its High Priest, it sees all men complete in Him. His reign from the Cross has hallowed and magnified the mission of the Church in every land. It will not be ended until all nations have heard the Gospel's joyful

sound and obeyed its call. Does the vision daunt our tamer day? Is it deflected by the contemptible ideas of success that relate to getting and spending? By the happiness evanescent as the dew? Then recall that even an Asiatic nomad knows full well what he wants, and is content to get it. Yet once he realizes his deepest self, he will start the prayer wheels on which a million petitions revolve daily to satisfy the longings of his heart for freedom and for rest. Recall again the homeless Pilgrim, tossing upon the North Atlantic in a rude and ill-found ship; doubtless a far less congenial memory for lovers of this world than Cleopatra in her gorgeous barge floating on the unruffled Nile like "a burnished throne." In the Egyptian Queen, if you please, is the smooth, full-running exploitation of the human machine to the satisfaction of the mechanic. Nevertheless, the Pilgrim came out of great tribulation to be the builder of commonwealths, whereas the grand lady glided toward suicide and the destruction of a vast empire. Truly, wisdom is justified of her children! 

I venture to think that the soul of the Pilgrim is still ours. It is averse to the hole-and-corner existence of the well-fed and the bovine. It rejects the vulgar social estimates that are too often repeated and too seldom weighed. Its delight is in the law of its Lord, and this law leads it in to many a daring quest. It maintains that to breast the heights of Love heroically makes the heroical man. The

voice from the mount that summoned Abraham from plenteousness to pilgrimage resounds in its recollection. This is the voice of Faith, whose resonance drowns the far too prevalent discordance of the voice of fear. It bids us hope, and see our hope frustrated—then hope again.

Listen to its trumpet note in the opening words of the original Gospel attributed to St. Mark. The author quotes the unknown seer of Israel's exile: "Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, who shall prepare thy way; the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make ye ready the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." The prophet viewed all preceding ages as a prolonged preparation for God's further entrance into human history. The evangelist applied the prophet's rhapsody to the revelation of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. It repeats its solemn admonition to the countless multitudes who will never know what life is till they know it in His life. It lays upon the Church the too long delayed enforcement of His ideals. Truth as opposed to lies, freedom as opposed to tyranny, justice and right as opposed to injustice and wrong—these are God's requirements made through Christ upon us. These are the signs and tokens of Christianity's perpetual miracle. These are the corrective forces of erroneous times, which shall yet bring down ever-rank states, chastising their menace and rebellion.

Are there any evidences in the Church that the

prayer of Paul is being answered: that her love yet more and more abounds in super-knowledge and supersensitiveness? The answer is in the affirmative. The need is recognized for one visible sacred society in the world for the moralization and balancing of political predominance. The unconditioned Church has already passed, and the unconditioned state is passing. Catholicity is as congenital to Protestantism as separation. Its reintegration is carried forward by the ameliorating drift of ordained events. We seek by love's illumination the oneness which is to precede and not to follow the unity of nations. Whoever doubts this, not many will doubt the benefit of that ever-deepening unity which finds expression in a common affection for the living God, for His divine order in the world, and for His intelligent creation. The necessity for the unity is ascertained by the condition of our fellow-men, and by reason working on the loftier levels of the text.

The operation of Christian principles is further revealed by the gradual weakening of national and racial prejudices. Their revival in certain quarters is simply paganism at bay. Paul anticipated their submergence in his declaration that henceforth he would know no man after the flesh. Gone forever were the tribalisms, the imperialistic divisions, the gulfs cloven by colour, culture and distance. The race was marshalled before the Apostle's eye. The King of Love came into the picture. He, too, was

no more under fleshly limitations, while all born of woman were federalized in Him and in the kingdom of His spirit. These are our principles, unless we propose to betray Him. Nor can we transfer them to those who pose as guardians of the peoples. They have been shut out from the real interpretations of the great things that have occurred in recent years. They constructed a pseudo-civilization which could be blown up by a pistol shot, with results that made hell itself turn pale. A civilization so exposed condemns itself, and justifies our insistence upon its regeneration. These conclusions, once adopted, prevent in us the mixed determinations for radical betterment which are afraid of ridicule; the vanity that will not incur a rebuff, the faint-heartedness due to sullen pride which wants to be sure of its ends before it will risk its means. They breed that courage which ignores "intellectuals" whose patronage of religion is the armour of the half-witted. Courage, in turn, abolishes the dread of life which visualizes doom ahead and ready to pounce, or even suspects that its author may turn out malignant. It has been pertinently asked what such courage cannot accomplish in a world of cross purposes, where so many people find their resolution to do well in the well-doing of the few? It is Christian courage; "valour without vengeance," blended with patience, with fidelity and with the understanding of moral and spiritual values.

I have come to the last word before touching

more than the fringe of the Apostle's prayer. Yet I beseech my brethren not to put it from them. If some things offered here are set aside because the standard is too high, the heroic for earth too hard, may not faith communicate in us its realizing power! We cannot escape the truths that Paul incorporates here in the language of devotion. They show us that what should be is the sole and the sure ground for that which is. No heart—that has felt the touch of Christ's release will refrain from paying tribute to the love that comes from afar, to be men's most intimate and dominant motive power. Lifted into wisdom's atmosphere, above every war-ring element, may we not regard the situation as this battle-scarred veteran regarded it. He, too, knew depression and wondered why the strength and loveliness of the Gospel should not prevail over hate and faction; why it did not purify the human fabric of its heathen antagonisms. But he also knew that, though forgotten by some of his converts, and not heard at all or else totally unheeded by a world covered with the autumnal tints of dissolution, the love that left every Christian soul did not lose itself in the sky.

It became a fortress aflame because the author and the finisher of Paul's faith forgot nothing. He faced the facts; he indulged in no sentimentalisms, and after gazing into a depth of turpitude which we cannot even imagine, he fared forth to preach the Gospel of Redemption. And why not? From



the Nebo of his vision he surveyed the spiritual landscapes of the race. Behind him were the dreary sands, the sterile solitudes of misspent ages, of lives never really lived, of deeds best disremembered. There were the bloodstained relics of hopeless fury, the slow, sure stagnation of vicious excess. Around him the marvelous Empire whose citizenship he cherished lay like a giant in the embrace of a courtesan slave. But before him arose the new world in which dwelleth righteousness.

After countless conquests over untold corruptions and abuses would come the day of Christ, the day of consummation and of victory. That day is nearer now than when Paul thus believed and prayed and wrought. For its coming God is yet to shake the heavens and the earth; the sea and the dry land. Those who herald it in love's utmost energies have no cause for fear. Those who would delay it ought to fear. But its last word is love, the love of holiness, of justice and of peace. And if we never cease, in loving God, to love these virtues, we can never lose what we thus love.

### III

## HANDLING LIFE'S SECOND-BESTS

HARRY EMERSON FOSDICK, D. D.

*"And when they were come over against Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia; and the Spirit of Jesus suffered them not; and passing by Mysia they came down to Troas. And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There was a man of Macedonia standing, beseeching him, and saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us, And when he had seen the vision, straightway we sought to go forth into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the Gospel unto them."*—ACTS 16: 7-10.

ONE hardly would suppose from the brevity and simplicity of this account that we are dealing there with one of the most important events in human history. Here Christianity crossed over from Asia into Europe. Here for the first time a Christian apostle on fire with the Gospel stood on the Asiatic shores of the Aegean and looked over into Macedonia, in Europe. It was an important day when Columbus set sail from the shores of Spain; it was an important day when Vasce da Gama rounded the Cape of Good Hope and opened the sea-route to the Indies; but did even such events surpass in importance the day when Paul carried Christianity out of Asia, which in a few centuries would be trampled down by

Mohammedanism, into Europe, where Christianity was going to have its chance? Our emphasis rests upon the fact that Paul's going into Troas and so into Europe was, from the human point of view, an accident. He was not headed for Troas; he wanted to go into Bithynia. "They assayed to go into Bithynia," reads the record—and we wonder, for Bithynia was one of the fairest, richest provinces of Asia Minor. To carry the Gospel there would have been a triumph. You may be sure, when you read that Paul wanted to go into Bithynia, that he wanted to go very much and that he tried to go very hard, for Paul never was a half-way man. And he could not get into Bithynia; the way was blocked; his plan was broken. The record says that the Spirit stopped him, but it doubtless was the Spirit expressing himself in untoward circumstances which thwarted the apostle's endeavour. I am sure that Paul at first must have thought it lamentable. I picture him arriving on the shores of the Aegean saying, "I wanted to be in Bithynia and here I am in Troas!"

Then, through Troas opened a door to the greatest service that he ever rendered. This ought to be for us a revealing incident in Paul's experience. He was about to bestow upon mankind the most far-reaching and significant service of his life, and he was doing it with the left-overs of a broken plan. It is a good cook who knows how to make his best out of left-overs, and that was Paul's problem.

Wanting Bithynia and getting Troas—how familiar an experience that is! But to take Troas, the second-best, the broken plan, the remainders of a disappointed expectation, and to make out of it the best thing you ever did in all your life—how much less familiar!

Yet as one studies men it is clear that all great living involves that kind of victory which Paul won over himself and his situation in Troas. When a life has finished its course, when it has gathered above itself a well-deserved halo of reputation, so that when men think the name they think of some high human enterprise with which the name is indissolubly associated, then in the glamour of that finished record we are tempted to forget that back somewhere in that life, its pivotal turning point, one almost can find the kind of experience that Paul had when he wanted Bithynia and got Troas. There is Phillips Brooks. When you think of him you think of preaching, great preaching that used to send his congregations out baptized with fresh power. As one of his listeners said, "He always makes me feel so strong!" But Phillips Brooks had not planned to be a preacher. That was not the Bithynia he hoped for. He wanted to be a teacher. As soon as he graduated from college he plunged into teaching, his chosen profession. And he failed. The way was blocked. It was a humiliating experience. He never altogether got over the disappointment of it. Years afterwards he came

down one day from President Eliot's office in Harvard, white as a sheet and fairly trembling because he had refused what he knew was probably his last chance to be a teacher. He wanted Bithynia and he got Troas. Yet through Troas opened an opportunity for usefulness the like of which he might not have found again, had he lived a hundred lives.

Or there is Sir Walter Scott. When we think of him we think of the novels that were the joy of our boyhood, so that for years some of us would have voted *Ivanhoe* the best story ever written. But Sir Walter Scott did not plan to be a novelist. That was not the Bithynia he headed for. He wanted to be a poet, the best poet of his day. And then Byron's sun rose and dimmed his lesser light. "Byron beat me," said Scott, "Byron beat me." And so he turned to writing novels with such a poignant sense that was a second-best that he published the first of them anonymously. He wanted Bithynia; he got Troas; and lo! through Troas the open door to the best work he ever did. There is no need, however, to go far afield into the biographies of other men. Is there anybody amounting to anything who has not wanted Bithynia and got Troas?

Is there anybody worth his salt who has not dealt with the problem of handling life's second-best? We who are growing older and watch youth coming, as we did, up through the gates of the dawn full of plans and hopes, eager with expectations, headed

for Bithynias, know one problem that they are going to face. What will they do when they strike Troas? How will they handle that? Will they know how to find there the greatest chance of their lives? Because this is such an unescapable human problem, we may well consider what it was in Paul that enabled him to make such a triumphant success out of the left-overs of a broken plan.

In the first place, Paul's religion entered in. Whatever may have been shaken when he got to Troas, the conviction still was there that God had a purpose for his life; that if God had led him into Troas there must be something significant in Troas which he had better find out; that God's purposes included Troas just as much as Bithynia; that God never leads anybody into any situation where all the doors are shut. Paul's religion entered in. For at the heart of Paul's religion was the vital conviction that in whatever situation he might be, his life was guided from above.

Consider this for a moment, for here is an experience which multitudes of Christians, with all the creeds they recite about God and all the hymns they sing to Him, never get within reach of. They sing about their lives as a God-directed pilgrimage:

“He leadeth me: O blessed thought!  
O words with heavenly comfort fraught!”

but if you should ask them how real in their daily living is the consciousness of walking with God's

directing companionship, most of them I fear, would have to give a shaky and uncertain answer. They do not believe in God. They do not believe that he has a general purpose for the world as a whole. They would agree with Darwin that "if we consider the whole universe, the mind refuses to look at it as the outcome of chance." They would agree with Tennyson that "through the ages one increasing purpose runs," but their thought of God's guidance is thus distant, diffuse, general, cosmic, universal. It never has come to grips with their own lives. It has never made them deal seriously with the thought that God has a plan for them as individuals. It never has put deep at the heart of them the conviction that in their characters and in their careers they can be guided from above. Yet, as a matter of logic, it is foolish to believe that God has a plan for the whole world and not a plan for the elements that make the world. There has recently been commenced in New York one of the greatest engineering achievements of all time—the vehicular tunnel under the Hudson. There is a plan for that work, but is it a plan in general? Did some engineer in a fit of vague desire wave his hand toward the Hudson and say, "Let us have a tunnel in general"? Upon the contrary, any earnest purpose to build a tunnel involves a purpose for every part. So, too, it is not logical to think that God has a purpose for the whole universe and not a purpose for the individual elements that make

the universe. Do you mean that an engineer, engaged upon one of the greatest of enterprises, knows how many individual bolts he is going to use and just where he is going to use them, but that God, with the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ, has never stopped to think what He would like to do with your life and mine if we gave him a chance? Surely, whatever else that may be, it is not logical.

“There was an old woman who lived in a shoe;  
She had so many children she didn't know what  
to do.”

Is God like that? Some people seem to think He is. He has a vague plan for this very extensive and numerous family of His but He is so distracted by the multitude of them that He has never got around to thinking about them one by one. So far as logic is concerned, that is nonsense.

Yet how little good a logical argument like that does any one. When the argument is all completed, not one of us is a bit the more likely to feel his life a God-directed pilgrimage. And the reason is this: God's guidance is an experience into which we have not only to think ourselves but to live ourselves. It is even more a matter of life than it is of argument. Consider, for example, a modern parallel to Paul—Adoniram Judson. When he was a young man he gave himself to the missionary cause and ever as his plans developed his ambition centered on India. That was the Bithynia he wanted—India. When



at last he got there they would not let him stay. The East India Company would not have him. After all his planning he arrived in India only to be hauled before the Governor and told to take the next ship back to America. For almost a year and a half he vainly sought a spot in India where he would be allowed to work. Then, convinced that entrance into India was impossible, he turned to Burma. That was his Troas—Burma the unknown, Burma untouched by white men's influence.

Do you suppose that during that huge humiliation and disappointment he *saw* at every step the leadership of God? Of course he did not! He was human. Do you suppose that during the long months he lay in the Emperor's prisons at Ava and Oung-Pen-La he had no hours of doubt? Of course he had. He was human. But he so believed in God's guidance and so handled his situation that doors began to open, doors into the greatest work of his life, so that no well-instructed mind can think Judson without thinking Burma, or thinking Burma without thinking Judson. And when at last the issue began to appear and he could look back, in retrospect, he *saw* that his life was a plan of God. Even early in his experience he said, "I would not leave my present situation to be a king." He would have said—about that first disappointment in India what Paul said about Bithynia, that "the Spirit of Jesus suffered him not." To live one's way through into the conviction that one's life is a plan of God is

one of the fine achievements of man's spirit. There is a wide difference between a formal creed about God's leadership and a great life that has worked it out and lived it through. It is like the difference between a prosaic statement of fact and a real poem. What, for example, is the gist of Oliver Wendell Holmes's poem *The Last Leaf*? It can be put into a single prosaic phrase—observations on a very old gentleman walking down the street. Yet listen:

“But now he walks the streets,  
And he looks at all he meets  
    Sad and wan,  
And he shakes his feeble head,  
That it seems as if he said,  
    ‘They are gone.’

“The mossy marbles rest  
On the lips that he has pressed  
    In their bloom,  
And the names he loved to hear  
Have been carved for many a year  
    On the tomb.”

There is such a difference between a prosaic statement and a real poem! Such a difference, too, exists between a formal creed about God-guidance and a great life that has worked it out! The most beautiful story in the Old Testament is woven about this theme. Joseph, stolen from his home, betrayed by his own brothers, dropped into a pit, sold to traveling slave dealers, made a man-servant in an Egyptian household, lied about by his master's wife and thrown into prison—do you suppose that the

young man through that humiliation and collapse of fortune warmly felt at every step God's guidance? No, of course he did not. He was human. But he so handled his affairs in Egypt that doors began to open, doors into the biggest business of his life, doors into a service that he never could have rendered, had he stayed in Canaan. He fed a nation. And at last, when his wicked, frightened, penitent brothers stood before him, this is what he said: "I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt. And now he is not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life. \* \* \* Oh no, it was not you that sent me hither, but God." That was Paul's experience, too, as he looked back upon the day he missed Bithynia and got Troas, and it can be your experience and mine. My friends, this morning in whatever Troas you may be, let your religion enter in! God never leads anybody into any situation where all the doors are shut. We too can live our way into the conviction that our lives are in the guiding companionship of God.

Not only did Paul's religion enter into his situation, but that fine fruit of Paul's religion—his love for people. The trouble with most folks when they miss Bithynia and come to Troas is that they begin pitying themselves. Paul could have done that. Think what he could have said to himself that night he landed at Troas. He could have said, "Here I

have given up everything for Jesus Christ. I could be to-day one of the leading rabbis of Jerusalem, saluted in the market place and listened to by everybody with respect, and I have given it all up for Christ. I have spent three years in Arabia, trying to think this Gospel through, and I have been fourteen years engaged in a small, trying, difficult, unnoticed, unrewarded work in Cilicia, distrusted even by the Christians because once I persecuted them. And now just beginning to get on a good footing with the Christians, believed in by Barnabas and a few others, I have come up through Asia Minor, preaching, and see what they have done to me! In Lystra they stoned me and left me for dead. And after that all that I asked was entrance into Bithynia and a chance to work. And I cannot get in. I am blocked. My plans are broken."

Ah, how easy it would have been for Paul to sit down in Troas and be sorry for himself: But instead, he no sooner arrived in Troas than he began thinking about other people. He wondered whether some folk might not be better off just because he had missed Bithynia and got Troas. He had not been there a night before he dreamed of a man from Macedonia saying, "Come over into Macedonia, and help us." It was Paul's generosity, his magnanimity, his love for people, that opened that door out of a difficult situation into the greatest service of his life. Once there was a man named William Duncan who, when he was a youth, gave

himself up to the missionary cause. When the time came, a missionary board sent him to a little Indian village in Alaska called Metlacatla. It was an unlikely Troas for a young man to land in who had doubtless dreamed of some fair Bithynia in which to work. For these Indians were a low, dirty, ignorant, miserable tribe. Their moral habits were so vile as to be quite indescribable.

But Dr. Charles R. Brown, who was there after William Duncan had been with them about forty years, makes this report: that you will find "every Indian family in its own house, with all decent appointments of home life. You will find a bank, a co-operative store, a sawmill, a box factory, a salmon cannery owned and operated by these Indians engaged in profitable industry. You will find a school where Indian boys and girls are taught to read and write, to think and live. You will find a church where an Indian clergyman is preaching the gospel of eternal life, and an Indian musician, once a medicine man beating a tom-tom, is now playing a pipe organ, while a congregation of Indians sing the great hymns of the church to the praise of Almighty God,"—and all because William Duncan, landing in Troas, loved people enough, saw deeply enough the possibilities beneath the forbidding and unlovely surface, to make that place the biggest chance he ever had in all his life. My friends, there is nothing in that attitude and its results which we cannot carry over into our lives.

We are all in Troas, all of us in some place where we would not have planned to be. Just as at Sebastopol each heart thought a different name, but they all sang "Annie Laurie," so to-day, when we say Troas, each of us thinking of some special situation where he finds himself, where he would not have planned to be. And the way out is love. George MacDonald said many good things, but he never said anything truer than this: "Nothing makes a man strong like a call for help." You go down the street completely fagged, so tired that you would like to lie down upon the curb and go to sleep, and suddenly there is a call for help—an accident—a child is hurt; and you will not remember how tired you are until it all is over.

"Nothing makes a man strong like a call for help." A mother has been utterly fatigued; she has been telling her friends for months that there is nothing left of her. And a child falls sick and needs her, and for weeks, night and day, she carries on and never thinks of giving up.

"Nothing makes a man strong like a call for help." One of the most beautiful things that you can see in the family is some old life-work all over now, usefulness gone, going to take it easy until death kisses life to sleep—to whom in a family crisis comes a call for help. Have you never seen a life throw off apparently some twenty years, display a resourcefulness and energy you never would have supposed were there, and a joy

that the old heart never had expected to feel again? And it would be strange indeed if there were not some young men and women here this morning not altogether dull to the peril of our civilization, not altogether blind to the danger of losing our civilization, with a new war that might sweep in on us from above and with a revolution that would then boil from below, and who feels that perhaps in them is something which they can give, something which they can do before they die to help win a fair escape from a desperate possibility.

That, too, is their strength, for "Nothing makes a man strong like a call for help." The trouble with the most of us when we land in Troas is that we forget that open door. We are so busy feeling sorry for ourselves that we do not see the man of Macedonia saying, "Come \* \* \* help us." So true is this principle of life that it applies even to little excursions into Troas. When you are annoyed and irritated, when you are lied about and hated and denounced, the only way out is love. So Edwin Markham sang:

"He drew a circle that shut me out—  
Heretic, rebel, a thing to flout.  
But Love and I had the wit to win;  
We drew a circle that took him in!"

And if one has the grace to handle an annoying situation in that spirit, he often can make of it the best chance for usefulness he ever had.

Yes, in spite of the long ages of evolution, most

of us can afford to take a lesson from the oyster. For the most amazing thing about an oyster is this: an annoying thing gets into his shell, he does not like it and tries to get rid of it, but as soon as he finds that he cannot get rid of it he settles down and makes of it one of the most beautiful things in the world. He uses it as his opportunity to do the finest thing that any oyster ever has a chance to do. My friends, if you have anything irritating and annoying in your life, there is just one prescription: make a pearl. It may have to be a pearl of patience, but, even so, make a pearl. And it takes faith and love to do it.

Here, then, is the conclusion of the whole matter: because Paul had these two elements in his life, when he got to Troas his imagination was filled, not with defeat, but with victory. And Emile Coué is right at least so far: imagination does dominate our life. You remember his figure: put a thirty-foot plank on the ground and there is not one of us who can not walk it from one end to the other; but put a thirty-foot plank at the height of a cathedral tower and there is not a man in a thousand who can. And this is not because the mere physical difficulties are greater in one case than in the other. It is because up there our imaginations are so filled with pictures of ourselves falling off and being dashed to pieces that with all the will in the world we cannot take a step on that plank.



So the trouble with most of us, when we strike Troas, is that we picture ourselves defeated. We wanted Bithynia—we got Troas. We think we are beaten. And we *are* beaten. We say we are beaten. We imagine ourselves beaten. And we *are* beaten. But just as soon as Paul got to Troas his imagination pictured victory. He had a dream that came out of his very heart; an opening door, a beckoning man, a renewed chance, a successful issue, and that imagination captivated and dominated his life. If you ask for the one thing that helped him most, I suspect that his thought went back, as it so habitually did go back, to the Cross of the Master. For that was a Troas for a life to land upon. What a Bithynia it would have been if His people had welcomed Jesus as their Messiah! But shut out from Bithynia He came to His Troas, His Calvary. Yet He so handled it, He so clothed it with the purpose of God and the love of man that

“All the light of sacred story  
Gathers round its head sublime.”

He took a very hard thing and He made a pearl indeed! And do you mean that in our smaller Troas there is not divine grace enough to see us through, so that it shall be not failure, but victory; not catastrophe, but one of the best chances of usefulness that we ever had in all our lives?

## IV.

### DIVINE SYMPATHY WITH MAN

NEWELL DWIGHT HILLIS, D. D.

*"But when he saw the multitudes he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd."*  
—MATTHEW 9:36.

A DELIGHTFUL book could be written on Jesus as the reconciler of the contradictions in thought and life. The philosophers talk about paradoxes and the poles of character, but these extremes in type and temperament are identified in the character of Jesus. The ideal and the practical are supposed to be mutually exclusive. Jesus' ideals are the despair of the holiest saints. Feed the beggars, nurse the sick, shelter the homeless—such practical methods were not understood. Radicalism and conservatism are at enmity, yet Jesus was the ideal radical, lifting the axe upon the root of the tree of evil, being, also, the ideal conservative, casting away chaff, but preserving all the wheat. One temperament lives to-day, another temperament is mystical and lives for to-morrow. Jesus made the most of the present hour, but in the highest sense postponed His pleasures and made time to be His partner.

The ideal patriot of the most pronounced of all the races, He was also the universal man, the world's one cosmopolitan. All the poles of thought and life, separated ordinarily by the diameter of being, were united in Jesus, because He is the cosmic man, full-orbed, even as our earth holds its two poles together.

His story is the most pathetic, the most picturesque, the most tragic in history. But it is His marvelous character that has captured the imagination of mankind. What voice or pen can tell His fascinating story, or search out the charm of Jesus? At last the scholars have found out why the rainbow is beautiful, why the rose is red, why the fruits are rich, why man's strength is a solace, and woman's beauty a joy. But time and strength itself would fail us to call the roll of Christ's gifts, that charm the imagination and conquer love. All classes now confess His beauty and supremacy, and each man for a different reason. The moral teacher, emphasizing ethics, praises Christ because He was so simple, sincere, unfevered, sane, balanced and wholesome. The philosophers praise Him because the laws He laid down lend themselves to a cosmic philosophy, for love to God, love to self, and love for brother, are all-inclusive. The reformers praise Him because He is the only reformer whose reforms have reformed. He never leaves an empty house to be filled again with the evil spirits of yesterday.

He crowds the evil one out of one door by leading a new spirit in at the other. Then, too, He makes beautiful the threshold, with vines and flowers over the door, that the spirit of goodness may love this new temple of truth and beauty. All who love forceful speech praise Christ, for if eloquence is going straight into the man's business and bosom, Jesus was eloquent beyond all the orators.

None of these facts, however, explain the attractiveness and influence of Jesus. Mere ethics are impotent as pictures of a blazing fire to warm cold hands. Great is the power of philosophy, but philosophy bakes no bread, and alone—alone, I say—Novalis to the contrary, it has given us neither God, liberty nor immortality. Ideal and practical, patriot and cosmopolitan, radical and conservative, reformer, philosopher, orator, philanthropist, all of these Jesus was, but He was more!

What is His secret? We shall understand Jesus when we mention the qualities that, if taken away, would leave Him other than He was. Looking toward God, take away His holiness, and He would not have been divine. Looking manward, take away His sympathy, and He would never have been our Saviour. This, then, is the appeal of Jesus, "He was tempted in all points like as we are." "He was touched with the feeling of our infirmities." His very miracles and wonderworks were deeds of mercy and signs of sympathy. He dwelt above us as the sky overarches the earth

for rain and dew, as a mother hangs over a cradle, in tenderness, pity and love. He is the over-arching God, brooding men, pitying them, suffering for them, suffering with men, suffering through men, and Christ's great revelation was not simply the love of God, but the suffering love of God, manifest unto men through sympathy with our ignorance, our defeats and our sins.

Our theological fathers called the roll of the attributes of God as infinite, eternal, unchangeable in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth. They entirely forgot to mention His love and they also overlooked His sympathy. This is like forgetting that a singer has a voice, that a sunbeam holds warmth, that the heart of the home is love. It seems all but unthinkable that the sympathy and suffering love of God found no place in our fathers' thinking. We could excuse that in the old authors. Job felt that in approaching God he drew near unto One who was clothed with infinite majesty and strength. The sweetness and solemnity of that old book grew out of the fact that the sage beheld the throne of God as a throne that held no spot, no vanity, no meanness and no sin. Standing on the grass, he looked upward toward the stars that for untold ages had shed forth their arrows of light. Then he bowed his head and worshipped Him who dwelt above the stars and behind them. In the forest the grove became to him a temple, where the open glades

were aisles, the trees were wind-harps, the birds were choirs, the white clouds were prayers, drifting homeward to God. The firmament above had its voice, the earth beneath its message, and all the arguments united to persuade in the beholder full faith in this unseen but all-powerful God, who supported the framework of suns and stars and lighted it with fretted bands of fire, then for a thousand years earth's noblest spirits read Job's words, they admired this far-off Being, but felt that He was infinitely above them.

At last Christ came, to give a new revelation of omnipotence. What pity was His, what sympathy toward the poor, what kindness toward the weak, the hungry, the sick, the heartbroken! His sympathy expands like a summer atmosphere over the hills of Judaea. He taught the world that strength was not enough. Samson is vulgar, because he cannot spiritualize his robustness. Hercules is strong, but brutal. The giant must have not only the strong hand, but the gentle heart. Jesus enters the scene, clothed with an alluring atmosphere of sympathy. Until His day, language and literature had no word for sympathy. After His three-and-thirty years, men registered His life story by coining that new word *sympathy*, one of the great intellectual achievements of our race. All language, it is said, is fossil poetry, but above all else there is poetry in this word "sympathy." How do I define it? It has been defined as the uni-

versal going forth of the soul in pity and love toward all living things; so that seeing the vine, bleeding on the walls of Elsinore, sympathy lifts the vine up and pins it in its place, that it may grow into the light, beholding the babe in the cradle and its mother brooding over it; seeing the youth with his knapsack setting forth to make his fortune, watching the happy boy and girl going toward the marriage altar. Sympathy stands praying that the man's maturity may be as spotless as a babe's innocent infancy; that the youth setting forth in his life voyage may strike no hidden rock; that the bridal wreath blossoms may never lose their perfume, or wither through the fierce heat of sin. Selfishness represents a soul sitting in a castle that is locked and barred against all comers seeking gifts. Then sympathy draws near to persuade selfishness to open the gates, and leads the soul forth that it may see how things fare with all poor and weak who live without the castle wall.

"How shall I understand Jesus?" the youth asked old Samuel Johnson. "The old theologians cannot explain Him, or the philosophers make Him clear." "I will tell you," answered the great scholar. "You will know Jesus when you come to understand that He is a man, and that His life is sympathy." Who by searching can find out God? No one. But he who walks with Jesus over the hills of Galilee, and beholds the out-rushing of His heart toward publicans, harlots,

sinners, priests, wrecks of men, rulers, rascals, Pharisees, will understand how God is doing through all eternity what Christ did in time—bearing man's sicknesses, carrying man's sorrows, healing man's griefs. The sympathy of Christ includes man's ignorance of his future years, his mistakes in choosing his occupation, and his wanderings from the path of rectitude. Indeed, but for His sympathy I know not how any child could find its way to manhood. A reflective mind is appalled by the magnitude of the task laid early upon a child. This little one must find its own way across the continent of the years. This babe within its first three years must master a new language. It is born without understanding of itself. Father and mother know even less about what the boy was made for.

When you buy a sewing machine for the house, or a reaper for the field, a book of illustrations accompanies the machine. Pictures explain each wheel and escapement; the inventor foresees each possible complication for the mechanism. Under such conditions, and with such a handbook, the control of the machine is an easy task. Even for adults, a visit to a foreign country is so difficult, and involves perils so many and great, that guide books are written and Baedeker personally conducts each one of us. But what if the child when born was accompanied by an Angelic Guide? What if, standing beside the cradle, the parent



beheld a strange messenger, with a handbook of instructions, saying: "This is the child's strongest faculty; here lies the line of least resistance. The child is over strong in his passions, weaken them. He is weak in his will, strengthen it. The danger points will be at the ages of fifteen, and eighteen, and fifty." Then what if this messenger gives the parent, in behalf of the child, the chart showing every curve of the long life pathway, with danger signals put up where the path came nigh to the precipice? Why, living would be easy under such conditions.

But men are not so born. Every babe is an enigma even to its parents. A babe is a treasure-box. You receive it "on sight, unseen." His teachers do not know what forms of greatness are locked up in him. No one understands so little the faculties he carries as he himself. This is the problem: to find out what one was made for, to develop one's birth-gifts, to get through life, having made the most of one's self and others. What if our Pilgrim Fathers had brought a child of five years of age to Plymouth and set the child down in the woods, and sailed away again, leaving it to make its own way through the forest, over the hills, across the rivers, to surmount western mountains of snow, to stagger through the alkali plains, to reach the far-off western sea and there set sail for the shores immortal, hidden behind the horizon!

But that is what God done for man,—and for man's good.

When I was a child, one winter's night my father told me the story of a journey that he made. A tall boy himself, early in 1830, he made a trip of exploration with his father through southern Ohio and Indiana and Illinois, and beyond the great river. The journey was through the forest, with its thick shadows. The woods were full of game, deer, turkeys, quail, and the nights were often hideous with the howl of wolves, and now and then was heard the panther's cry. Often the Indians with silent tread approached the camp, and sometimes the travelers came to groups of teepees standing beside the river. One night they camped beside a little stream, where was a tiny clearing in the forest and half-a-dozen cabins. To these explorers came a youth from one of the cabins, asking that he might join the party. On the morrow the youth won the consent of the niece of one of the settlers to go with him through the woods into the Great West. So that night they celebrated their wedding feast. A runner went forth and assembled a score of families. A circuit rider also was found. Lighting the torches, the wedding service began. But just as the bride and groom took their places the boy dropped the girl's hand and ran to a cabin. Coming out, he brought with him a new axe and an old musket. He leaned the axe against his one side and the gun

beside it, and stretching forth his other hand, the boy pledged his life, his axe and gun to that girl's support and defense.

Something in that story took hold of my imagination. All that night I lived over that scene. In my dreams I followed the boy and girl into the trackless forest. With his axe, I saw him hew out a tiny clearing, I saw the cabin that he built for her defense. I saw the hungry sea of savagery come in like waves to destroy that little island of his clearing. I heard the baying of wolves, the shriek of eagles, the Indians' whoop. I saw the torches lifted, I heard the crack of rifles, I thought of fevers, and the deadly miasma of swamps, the diseases that walk in darkness, the pestilence that stalks at noonday. I thought of that lonely girl, solitary in the vast forest, with no sound of friendliness save the stroke of her husband's axe in the far-off woods. And if I had had a thousand lives, I, a little child, would have given them all to have stood beside that youth, with his axe and gun, if only I might have gone with him and in sympathetic service wrought a child's defense.

But what am I, with my little sympathy? If it is given to us to be touched with the infirmities and perils and heroism of that boy and girl in the forest, what shall we say of the sympathy of the great God toward men? Our sympathy is a drop, and His an endless ocean! Warmth in us glows like a candle, and love in Him like ten thousand

summer suns! Our heart aches for the troubled, and, we tire; He never slumbers nor sleeps in His tireless solicitude!

Oh, what a journey life is! What a continent the years make up! The body is what a jungle! What passion-like wild beasts leap out of it! What arid places come through ingratitude! What deserts are these, where the loveless soul lives! What mountain peaks must be surmounted by the youth who loves righteousness and would achieve it! What would one not give to know the events that a day and an hour may bring forth. We journey blindfolded into the future. No man would be equal to this long life journey of seventy years but for the sympathy and solicitude of God. He understands our ignorance. He sympathizes with our weakness, our mistakes of judgment, our wanderings from the path. Like as a father, He pities His children. Like as a guide, with no word of harshness, He lifts them out of the slough and brings them back to the path. A thousand times He wards off unknown and unsuspected danger. This is the sun of the divine government of men. He follows man's career along the pathway of life, with a great teacher's sympathy for a people, with more than a father's sympathy for his son. With a heroic leader's sympathy for His oppressed followers whom He would fain redeem and save. God's sympathy includes man's defeats, his hopes, his unaccomplished ambitions.

Of late, publishers' lists have been rich in biography. The wisest books that have been coming from the press have been books of life. One of these has been a book of the statesman and one the life of the scientist, and others are lives of the poet, the soldier, the merchant, the inventor. All of the books have been misnamed, unfortunately. Every one ought to have the title rubbed from the back and this printed instead: *Baffled Hopes, a Biography*.

Last summer, abroad, I met a certain great orator. Eloquence was his birthright and honey issued from his lips. He had just had an interview with his physician. He was told that he was soon to die. Seeking to deflect the stream of conversation, I spoke of the happiness and richness of his life. And he exclaimed, "I would not live my life again, not for ten thousand worlds like this; no! not even if every world were a flashing diamond." I told him that I had found that life was an overflowing cup; that I told my young people the cup of happiness in the home, the cup of ambition, the cup of wisdom, the cup of philanthropy and service were cups that overflowed with happiness, and that because it was God's world no youth or maiden could hope for too much happiness, for God would disappoint them by giving more. And the great man answered that the desert intervals in his life had been few and short; that the valleys had been rich and beautiful, and the

hill-top hours many and radiant. "But," he said, "when *she* died I survived. I survived after her death, but in surviving I died. Her death slew me."

Yet this is man's full story. He plans and is defeated. Fawcett wants to be a universal scholar and loses his eyesight; Gray wants to be an orator, but he had no voice; the artist's hand is paralyzed; the mariner who loves the sea must seek a dry climate; the mining engineer must flee for his life from the mountain ranges where the clefts of rock are full of ore. The Florentine who loves his home becomes an exile; the home that has one child loses it; the sheik that has twelve and loves Joseph among them all must mourn for Joseph. The merchant loses his money; the statesman is defeated in office; our pride is touched on its tenderest side; Moffatt wants to transform Africa, and dies without having skirted its edge; Pestalozzi dreams of the new era of education for children, and all his hopes are baffled; Samuel Wesley had a plan to evangelize the world in his generation, but, oh, how seamy is the side of Samuel Wesley's life found in Hetty Wesley's journal! Nevertheless, their hopes were not defeated. God sympathizes with men's unaccomplished aims. He makes a thousand buds to bloom where one great apple is ripened. Strictly speaking, there are no baffled hopes, defeated plans, unfulfilled ambitions. The sympathy of God makes all to be successful.

Recently I have been deeply interested in Professor Brumbaugh's researches in the history of Pennsylvania. Every month brings to light some new event. I have elsewhere recounted the story of that forgotten hero, the Moravian missionary, Charles Fredric Post, in the mountains of Pennsylvania, who, having gained the confidence and love of the Indians there, was able to turn aside their hearts from the war of extermination upon the English settlers, although they had, under the influence of the French, gathered from forty to sixty thousand warriors and were about to begin their frightful onslaught. For days the French threatened the Moravian who had been brought back in a dying condition to plead with the Indians; and for days and nights the Indian chiefs protected him. At last the old chief told the missionary that the Indians would give him, their teacher, his wish. The next morning they folded their tents and the host disappeared in the forest. The French soldiers went back to Fort St. Clair; the sick man, cared for more tenderly than ever by his dusky friends, was carried over the mountain to Bethlehem, to die. Now that event which history could not explain when I was a boy, has become clear.

Did that missionary fail, who thought that premature death and failure were his? Were his hopes baffled? Were his ambitions defeated? Is not he who prevents a war greater than he who

gains one? Is not he who makes peace higher than he who slays his enemy? There are no unaccomplished ends for the good and the great. For myself, so far from being unwilling to go through life again for ten thousand worlds, I would go through ten thousand lives for one world. For the good that we do lives after us; we sow in tears, but we reap in joy. The sympathy of God fortunately includes our sinfulness, and our multitudinous transgressions—all this, too, notwithstanding the minuteness of His knowledge of man. It is said that the darkness and the light are both alike to God. He searcheth out every hidden thing. To Him all secrets are open and exposed. Is there a secret room in memory, whose threshold no one crosses because the door is always barred? Oft God and conscience linger there. For the book that is not read by your brother man has every page exposed to His all-seeing eye. But it is His minute and microscopic knowledge of us that lends us hope.

Some time ago a skillful physician detected certain threatening symptoms in himself. His medical skill made him the more careful. At last, thoroughly alarmed, he went to another physician, who was no wiser than himself. The thought of his home, of his large practice, of his career, perhaps, made it difficult to front all the facts. Perhaps he hid this symptom from himself, and overlooked that symptom, concealing both from his counselor. But one day the man said, "This is



all wrong. I want to know the worst. The best counselor is the one who speaks the truth even to brutality." So he sought out the world's greatest expert, a man widely known for his bluntness and gruffness as well. He told this great physician every secret thing, emphasized every minute incident that could magnify the danger, and at last the physician said, "There is no reason why you should not surmount all of these weaknesses, overcome this organic trouble, and secure perfectly good health again." In that hour, what a load rolled from the sick man's mind! He passed from despair to hope.

So, the very basis of our happiness is God's exhaustive knowledge of our sinfulness. He knows our weakness altogether. Others may be disappointed and lose all hope—God, never. Your mother, your father, yea, the wife of your bosom, may forswear all hope; but if there is a single spark of good that remains, God will nurture the smoking flax into the full flame of victory. God is love, and His love suffers. He is abroad seeking for His sinning children. He beholds His people as sheep that have no shepherd. Out in the darkness and storm, out in the fire, hail and blast, over the mountain and through the desert, through thorn and thicket, through fog and fire, God seeks, He pursues, and His purpose is redemption; His heart, love; His healing, mercy, sympathy, succor!

# V

## FORTY YEARS IN THE WILDERNESS

CHARLES E. JEFFERSON, D. D.

*"And the Lord's anger was kindled against Israel and he made them wander in the wilderness forty years."*—NUMBERS 32:13.

**G**OD made the Israelites wander in the wilderness. They were on their way to Canaan. They had been slaves in Egypt, and they have been delivered and are on the journey to the Promised Land—a land flowing with milk and honey. But God keeps them outside this Land of Promise. He compels them to wander in the wilderness. They live forty years in the region of sand and rock, where the serpents bite and the adders sting. The Promised Land was not far away. It is only two hundred miles from Mount Sinai to Beersheba, but it took them forty years to go that distance. It is only sixty miles from Kadish Barnea to Hebron—not nearly so far as from New York to New Haven—and yet to enter the Promised Land from Kadish required thirty-seven and a half years. They wandered forty years. That is a long time. That is the life of a generation. The mighty host which departed from Egypt never reached the Land of Promise.

They died in the wilderness. All the women died. Even Miriam died. All the men except two died. Even Aaron died. Caleb and Joshua were allowed to go in, but Moses could not enter. He came close enough to see the beautiful land. For a moment he caught a gleam of its glory, but with that gleam in his eyes they closed in death. Even Moses died in the wilderness. Here then we find ourselves face to face with a strange contradiction. God had promised the Israelites to give them this land. Through Moses He had said to them that it was theirs, and a Hebrew historian is bold enough to say that God bound Himself by an oath that the land should belong to them, and yet, for some reason, God will not allow them to enter. He keeps them wandering in the wilderness forty years. He shuts the door of the land flowing with milk and honey in their faces, and compels them to spend their whole life in the wilderness.

The mystery deepens when we bear in mind that the people wanted to go in. They remembered Egypt. They knew what slavery was. They had a horror of Pharaoh. They had dreamed for years of this Land of Promise. And now when the time has arrived for them to enter they may not do it. From the outside they look in and then lie down and die. God makes them wander in the wilderness. If you ask why could they not go in, the answer is that they were not the kind of men who could take possession of a promised land, or hold

it even if they should get it. They had the disposition and the mental habits of slaves. They had been in slavery so long that the power of the will had been eaten out. They had no tenacity of will. They were wavering and fickle as children. They were easily discouraged. A danger threw them into panic. An obstacle made their heart faint. They were always complaining. Again and again they found fault with Moses. At times they rose in insurrection against him. More than once they threatened to go back to Egypt.

This cowardice was due to their lack of religious convictions. They had a religion, but it was not a power in their life. They had an ark, but it did not symbolize anything which had found a place in their soul. They had a series of laws, but the laws were written on tables of stone and not on their hearts. There was no steadfastness in themselves because they had no real faith in God. Their religion was a ritual and not a power by which they lived.

Moreover, they had no capacity for engaging in co-operative effort. They had had no training in the art of acting together. They did not know how to combine their strengths for the accomplishment of a common end. This rendered them impotent in the presence of their foes. This is why the obstacles and perils daunted them and overcame them. And so there was nothing for them but the wilderness. They were not fit for anything better.

The Land of Promise was waiting for them, but they could not enter it until they had gotten rid of their servile habits and dispositions. They had to tarry until they grew up in their soul religious convictions. It was necessary for them to wait until they had mastered the first principles of living together and working together for a common end. All of this comes out in an episode narrated in the thirteenth and fourteenth chapters of the Book of Numbers.

The story of the spies is one of the vivid and unforgettable stories of the Old Testament. Parents ought to read that story to their children early. It is not necessary to read it more than once. A child who hears that story once will never forget it. Those of us who were brought up in Christian homes heard that story years ago, and we have carried it with us to the present hour. We can never lose it. We shall carry it through the gates of death and beyond. The story can be told in a few sentences. When the Israelites reached Kadesh-barnea, Moses sent twelve men north to investigate. They were gone about six weeks, and when they returned they brought a unanimous report in regard to the fertility of the land. It was indeed all that it had been pictured to be, and as proof of its fertility they brought samples of various kinds of fruit which they found growing there, figs and pomegranates and grapes. It was a land flowing with milk and honey. They

all agreed on that, but these twelve men did not agree as to the possibility of taking possession of the land. Two of them—Joshua and Caleb—said that it could be taken, and they urged that it be taken at once. But the other ten told a different story. They dwelt on the stature of the men they had found there, and of the strength of their walled cities, and declared that the land was inhabited by giants of such immense size that the Israelites in their presence felt like so many grasshoppers, and they went on to add that when these giants looked on them they looked at them in a way which clearly showed that in the opinion of the giants the Israelites were grasshoppers indeed. This story struck consternation to the hearts of the people. They were so stirred up they could not sleep. They bawled all night long like a lot of babies, sobbing “Would to God we had died in Egypt, would to God we had died in the wilderness!” When morning came Joshua and Caleb tried to quiet their hearts, but all in vain.

Their appeals only created exasperation, and the people were on the point of stoning them to death. In their desperation they elected a leader who would conduct them back to Egypt. The Hebrew historian cannot tell the story without showing his hot condemnation. He goes so far as to say that God Himself was disgusted with them and had a notion to wipe them out with an awful pestilence, and that He would have done it had not Moses

pleaded with Him to be merciful and patient. God did not destroy them, but He condemned them to wander in the wilderness. He kept them there until they died. Only two of them were permitted to enter the Land of Promise—the two who believed it was possible to *go* in. Men who feel like grasshoppers are never allowed to take possession of any land of promise. And so the Israelites did not go into the land flowing with milk and honey because they were lacking in character. It was their character which kept them out. Being what they were there was no place for them but the wilderness, and there they lived and died.

What gives this Hebrew story perennial significance is that it is a picture of human experience constantly repeated. Not only did Israel wander forty years in the wilderness, but every people does that also. That is the experience of all mankind. The Hebrew world is a microcosm—a little world—and when you study that little world you study human experience everywhere. God paints a great picture on the wide canvas of the world, but on the little canvas of Palestine He painted a miniature, and in that miniature He expressed everything that can be told.

The whole history of the human heart is there, all its hopes and aspirations, its fears and dependencies, its wildness and despair, its loves and hates, its strength and weakness, its appetites and passions, its tragedy of woe and tears. Would you

see your own country? Then read the ancient story of how God kept the Israelites wandering in the wilderness forty years. Let us think of three lands of promise. The first of these is the land of sobriety, the land freed from the awful curse of drink, the land in which mothers do not sob themselves to sleep because their son is going down into a drunkard's grave—the land in which wives do not tremble when they hear their husbands' staggering footfall on the stair, indicating for them beating—the land in which children never go to bed hungry because their father has spent his wages on drink—the land in which the community is not terrorized by frenzied men who have put an enemy into their mouth to steal away their brains—the land in which society is not blasted by an institution which is the rendezvous of harlots and thugs and scurvy politicians—the land in which industry is not crippled by wage earners failing to report on Monday morning because they have not recovered from their Sunday debauch—the land in which jails and asylums and almshouses are not crowded with the human wreckage piled up to the demon of drink. That is a beautiful land, and every Moses has carried it in his eye. That is a land which God has promised, and toward that land humanity is moving. It was Gladstone who years ago said in the British House of Commons that the ravages of drink were equal to the combined ravages of war, pestilence



and famine. Men of vision have long looked toward this land of promise.

A few years ago our people set their faces in that direction. They put an amendment into the Constitution prohibiting the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors to be used as a beverage. The promised land seemed near. Jubilant souls cried: "Now we are going in!" The Volstead Act was passed. "Now we are sure to go in." The Mullan-Gage law was passed. "We are going in at once." So did many think. But alas! we are not in. We are still in the desert. We are likely to be there forty years. The land of promise is near, but we cannot go in. We have not enough character to take possession of this promised land. We have the disposition and mental habits of slaves. It is not enough to pass laws. We must enforce them. The character of a nation is not revealed in the laws which it writes. That character is revealed in the laws it enforces.

It is in the enforcement of the law that moral character receives its severest test. And we are a nation of law breakers. What laws do we ever enforce, except in a desultory and procrastinating and lukewarm manner? We do not enforce them because we have not manhood enough. We allow them to be broken because our character is weak. See how character crumbles up in the contact with this prohibition law. A policeman is offered a bribe and he collapses. A juryman is the victim

of a grudge and fails to do his duty. A judge is in sympathy with the friends of disorder, and falls below the demand of his high calling. A physician wants to make money, and writes law-breaking prescriptions. A druggist wants to make money and converts his store into a saloon. An agent of the government—with an itch for gold—sells the cause he is paid to defend. A citizen of the Republic, in order to put money into his purse, sinks into the criminal classes and becomes a traitor to us all. Why do we not go into the promised land? Because we have so little moral stamina. See the men falling here and there, everywhere, going to pieces because their character is rotten. That is the rotten spot in our American character. If our Republic goes down it will go down because we are rotten at that point.

We have scant reverence for law, and we have not moral character enough to enforce the laws we pass. In the presence of the lawbreakers we act like so many grasshoppers. Why cannot we go in? Because we have the dispositions and appetites of slaves. The Israelites could never forget the fleshpots of Egypt. They were slaves there, but they often had their stomachs well filled. They wanted to enter the Promised Land, but when the journey called for sacrifice they rebelled and turned their faces longingly toward Egypt. So it is to-day. The fleshpot is the bottle, and many men and women are looking back to it.

They would like to have the world enter the land of promise, but they object to making any sacrifices in order that we may arrive there. "Oh that I might be able to get my hand on the bottle, at any time of day or night! Oh, that I could always have my bottle." That is the cry of a man who has the soul of a slave. He does not care for humanity. He puts his own selfish pleasure first. He is not devoted to the cause of progress. He wants to tickle his nerves. Sensuous indulgence comes first. "Oh, let us go back to the fleshpots of Egypt." Like the Israelites—we are cowards.

We are afraid of Anak and his sons—we are afraid of giants. No one can enter a promised land who is afraid of giants. America will never be delivered from the curse of drink unless we dare face the giants and overcome them. We are engaged in a great war. How great many as yet fail to see. We had a great war only a few years ago. We were at war with the giants of Potsdam. But that was a little war compared with the war in which we are now engaged. We are fighting two of the great appetites of human nature—the appetite for money and the appetite for drink. Let us not imagine that to overthrow them is an easy task. We have entered on a long campaign. We are not going into the promised land to-morrow, or the day after, next year, or the year after that, this decade or the decade after that. We may be obliged to wander in the wilderness forty years.

But do not be discouraged. The end is certain. There will be a swinging back and forth of the battle line, just as there was in the years from 1914 to 1918, when we were fighting the hosts of Potsdam. There will be victories and there will be defeats. Do you remember how the news ran in the great war? It was victory, defeat, defeat, defeat, defeat, defeat, victory! In the opening of 1918 it was defeat, defeat, defeat, defeat, until we could hardly sleep at night, so intolerable became the strain, but one day the tide turned and the papers printed victory. Day after day it was victory, victory, victory, until at last there came a glorious day, never to be forgotten, when the bells all rang and the people gave a great shout. You must expect many a defeat in the wilderness, but the promised land is ahead of us, and the land belongs to us, and with God's help we are going in!

A second land of promise is a warless world. "They shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks, and nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." That is the promise. *Moses* has carried that beautiful land for centuries in his eye. The world in which there are no battle-ships, no submarines, no target practice on the water, no bayonet drill upon the land. Think of a world without a bayonet, and without poison gas, and without an aeroplane putting a blot on heaven by its antics in mastering the art in dropping bombs

upon sleeping cities. All men of vision see that world. They catch the gleam of its glittering spires, they feel the uplift of its joy and peace and singing. A world in which munition makers do not grow fat at the expense of the toiling millions, a world in which humanity is not terrorized by poisoned gossip and lying rumors of wars that are about to come, a world in which nations do not groan under budgets created by the lords of war, while all the establishments of peace are handicapped and crippled because the resources of the people are squandered on the instruments of blood. That land is not far away, but humanity does not enter in.

Why? Because we are slaves to old traditions, older than the times of Rameses II. We are the victims of old suspicions and ancient hatreds, older than the oldest of the Pharaohs. We wander in the wilderness because we are not men of religious faith. We have a religion, but it is largely a religion of ritual. We go through religious forms, but we do not believe in God. We do not believe in love. Our religion is not a moving, all-conquering power in our lives. Like the ancient Israelites we have the name of God and the Decalogue, but the law of God is not written on our hearts, and therefore we are cowards in the presence of the giants who are determined that the policy of preparedness shall be continued everlastingly, and that nations shall keep on practising

the art of war. In the presence of the old ideals and customs we feel ourselves grasshoppers, and that is why we must stay forty years in the region of sand and rock where the serpents hiss and the wild beasts roam.

The third promised land is a united world. God has made of one all the nations to live together. Humanity is on the way to an organized international life, a life so complete and beautiful that it lies before the imagination like a city with walls that flash like jewels. All the kings of the world are going to bring their wealth into this city. All the kingdoms are going to become the Kingdom of the King of Love. Every knee is going to bow to Him and every tongue is going to confess that He is master. That is the promised land. Toward that land mankind is marching, but as yet we are in the wilderness. We cannot enter in.

Two thousand years ago Paul declared that the whole creation was groaning and travailing in pain, waiting for the appearance of a nobler type of men. What is the world groaning for to-day? The emergence of a higher type of men. We are timorous and fumbling creatures. We are afraid of Anak and his blustering sons. We shrink from going on ahead and taking part in the organization of the life of the world. There must be a league of nations, a society, a federation, a family of nations, and this must be the creation of the human brain and heart. In this great work America

should have a foremost place. How can we ever do our work so long as we persist in acting like children? Some people despise the idea of a league of nations because it was, as they think, Mr. Wilson's idea. They call it a Democratic idea, and for Democratic ideas they have no place in all their thought. They do not know that Mr. Taft had the idea before Mr. Wilson had it. Many Democrats despised the idea in the earlier years because it was a Republican idea. It is not a Democratic idea, nor is it a Republican idea, it is an American idea, and every American ought to be loyal to it. The idea of leaguings nations is the brightest idea we have ever given to the world. The work of leaguings nations is the one work of supreme significance which God has permitted us to perform.

We began this work in the eighteenth century. We leagued thirteen nations. It was a difficult thing to do, but we did it. There were many giants to oppose, but, thank God, they all were conquered. Our forefathers were not grasshoppers. They had no fear of giants. We forget sometimes that Europe is only a little larger than the United States, and that our states are as large as nations. Our own Empire state is larger than Portugal, larger than Holland, larger than Belgium, larger than Switzerland, larger than Serbia, larger than Bulgaria. In population we are larger than Norway and Sweden combined, larger than

Ireland and Scotland combined. And we have leagued forty-eight nations—extending all the way from the Atlantic to the Pacific—nations some of which are three thousand miles apart. We have organized these into a unit and brought them all into subjection to one supreme court. That is the American idea. Now if we can league Maine and Oregon, Massachusetts and California, Rhode Island and Idaho, why cannot nations be leagued that are separated by three thousand miles of water? Why cannot Great Britain and the United States be leagued, the United States and France and Italy and all the other nations of Europe, all the other nations of the world? Why cannot we have a federation of nations all of which are bound to submit their disputes to the arbitrament of a World Court?

The world cannot get on without a League of Nations. There must be a league, and we must be in it. Let us put away our childishness and cease to indulge in mutual recriminations. No matter whose fault it was that we are not in the present League, let us see to it that we go in—if not into the present League, at least into some other league which shall take the place of the League in its present form. Let us put an end to the present tragedy of lagging behind with Turkey and Mexico when we ought to be in the forefront of those who are engaged in organizing the life of the world. In a crucial hour, when the whole



world expected our help, we have held aloof to our everlasting disgrace! But the world *will* be leagued. The stars in their courses are fighting for that. All these men who opposed a leagued world, and who whimper about giants are only for a day. They will die in the wilderness. They are not fit for a land of promise. Our only hope is in the cemetery. If men did not die humanity could make no progress. Thank God, then, for death. The cowards and the slaves are buried in the wilderness, but the Calebs and Joshuas press on. They go in. Parents, bring up your children to be Joshuas and Calebs. We are on the way to the land of promise. Our generation will die in the wilderness, but other men—nobler and stronger—will come after us, and to them God will fulfill His promise. Humanity is moving forward. It is marching towards the City whose atmosphere is filled with the light which falls from the face of God.

## VI

# THE BEAUTY AND POWER OF CHRISTIAN FAITH

LEANDER S. KEYSER, D. D.

*"But without faith it is impossible to please him [God]."*—HEBREWS 11:6.

**T**HE first verse of the chapter from which our text is taken gives a beautiful description of the power of Christian faith. It says: "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Many people do not understand the meaning of the saying. It means that faith in Christ converts the things we hope for into realities, and the things we cannot see into substantial facts. For example: you may hope that there is a God, but you may not feel sure. But when you accept Christ by faith you will know by your inner experience that God is a blessed reality. Likewise you cannot see spiritual things, but when you accept Christ by faith you have the proof of their reality in your heart. Faith in Christ introduces you to a new world, because it converts you into a new creature.

One may say quite correctly that the Bible is a great faith book, through and through. Go back

into the Old Testament, and it says, "And Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." Job is commended for his brave statement, "Yea, though he slay me, yet will I trust him." This he said in reply to his wife, who had lost her faith and had advised her husband to "curse God and die." How often in the Psalms men are exhorted to trust God! When Jesus began His public ministry, His first text was, "Repent ye and believe the gospel, for the kingdom of God is at hand." He also said, "Whosoever believed on him should not perish, but have everlasting life." At another time He said, "Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me." And again, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Many times He commended those who exercised faith in Him and rebuked those who lacked it.

The inspired apostles sing the same refrain. Listen to Paul: "The just shall live by faith." "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." " whatsoever is not of faith is sin." The same truth is taught by the Apostle John, who says: "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." Then comes the great faith chapter in Hebrews, in which the long roll of heroes is called with ringing emphasis. By faith Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice than Cain; by faith Enoch was translated; by faith Noah built the ark; by

faith Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Moses, Gideon, Barak, Samuel, David, and the rest accomplished their great works and proved their heroic character.

Now, through a good many years of experience, study and investigation, I have always found that whenever the Bible lays stress upon a thing it means that it is of vital and fundamental importance. This great Book, through which the Holy Spirit has transformed so many lives and saved so many people from sin and sorrow, does not emphasize mere trifles. It may, in places, give a good many details, but all of them have their place and value in the unfolding of God's great purposes. So, since the Bible has so much to say about faith, it must mean that it is something of great importance. Let us see whether the Bible's estimate of faith is not correct.

Perhaps a definition of Christian faith at this point would help us to see its value, beauty and simplicity. The best definition I know of is found in a text-book which I use in my theological seminary. This is the definition: "Christian faith is personal trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, alone, for salvation." Is that not just right? And how simple and clear it is? A little child knows what trust is. It knows when it trusts anyone; when it trusts its father and mother. If a stranger enters the home, the little one knows whether it trusts him or not. I have gone into homes where

the little folk did not trust me at first; they had to learn whether I was trustworthy, or whether I might do them some harm. So we Christians know when we trust Christ; when we surrender fully to Him and believe in Him alone for our salvation. There is nothing mysterious—at least, nothing obscure—about faith in Christ. It is the simplest and most child-like act of the soul. It is simply trusting Him; just saying to him, “Here, Lord Jesus, I lay my hand in Thine; lead Thou me in the way that I should go.” We do not need to have a long, winding theological definition of faith. It is just trust in Christ.

At this point I wish to say that there are many people outside of the Christian church and fold who have mistaken notions about Christian faith. Some of them think it is blind credulity. They assign it to ignorance and superstition. They declare that if we Christians were more intelligent and better educated we should not believe the Bible is God’s Word and the Christ is the Saviour of the world. They say we ought to study science and philosophy, and then we would soon become too enlightened to accept the doctrines of the Christian religion. Sometimes sceptics say we are like callow young robins in their nests; if you touch the rim of the nest all the little gold-lined mouths will fly open, and they will swallow whatever is put into them. The favourite epithet that unbelievers fling at Christian believers is that they

are ignorant. Therefore they are blindly credulous, ready to gulp down almost anything. Now, I desire to show that these critics of ours are in error. In the first place, I have travelled around a good deal in the world, and have spoken to many audiences of Christian people, and I must confess that I have never found them so ready to bolt down everything I have said. In every congregation I have served there have been those who always kept me watching my "p's" and "q's." They would even tell me when I broke a rule of grammar or syntax. I had one parishioner who often corrected my mispronunciations, and I found him right and myself wrong, almost every time. He was well posted in Webster's Dictionary. Then, it might be worth while to inquire how many colleges and universities organized infidelity has established in this country and are now carrying on. Do you know of any? I do not. Of course, sometimes an infidel or a radical Biblical critic will sometimes find his way into a Christian college, and will try to undermine the Christian principles on which they have been founded, even while he is eating the bread which the Church furnishes and enjoying its emoluments. But organized unbelief organizes no schools of advanced learning.

Have the "ignorant" and "gullible" people of the Christian church established any colleges in this country? You know they have. Their educa-

tional institutions dot our land from ocean to ocean, from lake to gulf, as daisies spangle a Kansas prairie in the springtime. And these colleges give complete courses in the liberal arts, and list in their curricula all the various branches of science, literature, history, language, philosophy, psychology, and the rest. Who is it that are likely to be well informed and educated—the people who have the colleges or those who have none?

It can readily be proved that Christian faith is not superstition and credulity. One proof is this: Christian faith is begotten in the soul by the Holy Spirit. No man can exercise justifying faith in the Lord Jesus unless he is enabled to do so by the Spirit of God. "No man can say that Jesus is Lord, save by the Holy Ghost." So says the apostle John. And Paul puts the matter plainly: "By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourself; it is the gift of God." But it is not at all probable that the Holy Spirit would beget blind gullibility in the soul of any man.

Moreover, the Bible itself warns people not to be too ready to believe everybody who brings forward a proposition. Christ said, "Take heed how ye hear," and, "Take heed what ye hear." Does not that require discrimination?

Our Lord also said to His disciples: "Beware of false prophets; for they come to you in sheep's clothing: but inwardly they are ravening wolves." Does that mean that Christ's disciples are to be

credulous? Note, further, what Paul says: "Prove all things, hold fast to that which is good."

Discriminating! Hearken to John, who admonishes us thus: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they be of God." No! the Bible itself challenges us to be discerning, and not permit ourselves to be victimized by schemers and pretenders. The patent fact is, the person who alleges that Christian believers are stricken with credulity simply give themselves away. They prove by their very criticism that they have never had the experience of Christian faith, and, hence, that they are incompetent to pronounce judgment upon it. Some men expose their inadequacy whenever they open their mouths, so it is with those who scoff at Christian faith as blind gullibility. They should remember that many finely educated men and women are true believers in Christ and the Bible. In the college to which I belong we have between fifty and sixty professors and instructors, many of them bearing scholastic degrees from the best universities of this and other countries; and yet every one of them is a confessing Christian. You will never convince me that all these teachers and many other finely educated people the world over are in the bondage of superstition and credulity.

Recall our brief message from Hebrews—"But without faith it is impossible to please God." Why is that? Why is faith pleasing to our Father



in Heaven? Does it really make any difference to Him whether we have faith or not? Why is faith pleasing to God? Because He is our Heavenly Father, and likes to be trusted. How does that thought impress you? God likes to be trusted. He cannot help being grieved when we do not have confidence in Him. He is hurt when we regard Him as a falsifier. Do not *we* want to be trusted? Does it not grieve us when people question our honesty? And the more upright we are, the more sensitive we are about being suspected of duplicity. And our Heavenly Father in this respect is certainly like us, for we have been made in His image. Is it not a delight to think of giving joy to our Father in Heaven? Do you not like the idea of making Him glad? Would you want to grieve Him? Well, you can please Him best by trusting Him and doing His will.

More than that: does it make no difference to God as to what is the condition of our hearts? When His all-scrutinizing eye looks down into our souls, the crucial question is—is He pleased or displeased? He certainly knows all about our psychology. The Bible says: “He that formed the eye, shall he not see? And he that formed the ear, shall he not hear?” So He that created the mind, does He not know the mind and feel an interest in its status? When He looks down into our psychology, and sees that our hearts are full of trust toward Him, and that we love Him and

desire fellowship with Him, does it not seem reasonable to believe that He is made glad in contemplating such a state of the soul? On the other hand, how it must pain Him if He looks down into our hearts and finds arrogance and distrust there; finds, too, that we will not believe in Him, in His goodness, in His Son whom He loved with an everlasting love and sent down into this sin-cursed and sorrow-stricken world to redeem and save it! Let us remember that God is the ultimate and original Psychologist, and knows better than anyone else the moral and spiritual status of the soul! If some of our modern psychologists had the fear of God in their hearts they would not write works—even text-books for schools—that omit and eliminate all references to a divine Creator.

Another reason why faith is pleasing to God is this: He does not want us to be narrow and one-sided in the development of our mental powers. The rationalists almost worship reason; they make it the norm of judgment, and greatly exaggerate its value and power. Of course Christians also believe in the use of reason, because it is a God-given faculty of the soul, and the Holy Scriptures enjoin upon us to be “able to give an answer to every one that asketh a reason for the hope that is in us.” But man possesses other mental powers beside the logical. The mind also has the faith faculty, which is also a part of its innate and original constitution. Therefore we cannot please

God unless we use and unfold all our divinely bestowed faculties. In all life faith or confidence is necessary. The little child trusts its parents long before it learns to reason. The student must trust the teacher. Without mutual confidence, the commerce of the world could not be carried on. You never would get aboard a train, either by day or by night, if you did not trust the men all along the line as well as the engineer and fireman in their cab. In the matter of science people must trust the technical experiments and researches of the experts. I do not mean that we must accept their speculations, but we must accept the facts, and these to a very large extent, on faith. Similarly, God wants us to use and cultivate the faith faculty in our relation to Him. He wants an all-round psychical and spiritual culture; hence He says to us, "Use your reason in the right way, but develop faith too, because that is also a vital part of your mental make-up." God knows what a beautiful power of the soul faith is. Thus we see that without it we cannot please Him.

In itself, or that is to say intrinsically, faith is a good thing while doubt is an undermining and destructive thing. We cannot build life on negations, we can build it only upon positives. And this is still another reason why faith is pleasing to God: it is constructive, up-building. In this mundane world mutual confidence connotes a normal state of affairs, while distrust always implies

that an abnormal condition. Let me illustrate: Take the home. I have in mind a beautiful picture. Here lies a little child asleep in its crib, while the mother is going about her housewifely duties. Presently the little child wakes up, and calls, "Mamma! Mamma!" The mother hears it. Trust a loving mother to hear the call of her child! She hurries into the room, steps over to the cradle, and smiles down into the baby face. The little face answers back with a smile. Then the chubby hand and arms reach up. The mother bends down, puts her arms about the little baby form, lifts it up, presses it against her loving heart, and prints a kiss of affection on the ruby lips. A beautiful picture, is it not? What does it mean? It means that perfect love and trust exist between the mother and the child. And that is just as it should be. It connotes a normal status in that home.

But let us change the picture. Suppose that the child should cry out with terror and shrink back with affright every time its mother approached it! What would that mean? It would mean that there was something radically wrong with either the mother or the child, or with both. Thus we see that the relation of trust is an index of a normal condition, whereas doubt is an index of an abnormal condition. In order to impress the lesson still further, I will use another illustration. One of the most beautiful human relations is that sub-

sisting between husband and wife. Shall I tell you what, here on earth, is the place which is nearest to Heaven? I can point you to the exact spot. It is the home in which there is perfect love and confidence between husband and wife. There you have the normal and the happy home. On the other hand, I can name the place here on earth which is nearest to the other locality which we mean when we point downward. It is the home where suspicion and distrust has crept between husband and wife; where the so-called "eternal triangle" has intruded to do its deadly work, and thus to destroy all hymeneal joy! No further illustration is needed, although instances might be indefinitely multiplied. Our proposition is proved: in all human relations mutual confidence spells a normal condition; lack of it, or doubt, means that something has occurred to disturb the normal order.

Since that is true in human life, why may not the same principle hold good in man's relation to God? Is it not the normal status for man to trust God, the Ultimate Reality? Is it not abnormal to doubt God and His truth? There must be something that is ultimate and eternal. Everything finite is dependent upon something else. Therefore there must be something that is independent—the uncaused of all finite and dependent existences. Does it stand to reason that any soul can be happy and stabilized if it be not in tune with

that which is ultimate and absolute? Would a ship be safe in a storm if it were anchored to a shaking reed? Can a soul be safe and joyous if it be anchored to finite and mutable things?

But whom may we trust? It is true, you must put your faith in a worthy object or person. It will not do to trust a rogue. Neither can we trust a weak, unstable person. We cannot trust everybody or everything. If we do we are doomed to be disappointed. I want to appeal to every regenerate person whether, when you have trusted Jesus Christ, He has proved Himself untrue; whether He has disappointed you. Along this line I have a real and convincing experience. Once for a time I put my faith in my intellectual powers and processes. I said, "I will solve all the problems of life and religion just as I solve mathematical problems—by reason." For a while I went proudly on my way, and even felt a good deal of exhilaration in my quest for truth. But do you know what occurred by and by? I found that my rationalistic processes had fooled me, disappointed me, led me into deeper and deeper doubt, and finally landed me in the darkest agnosticism. Oh, the anguish of those days! I do not want to recall them oftener than is necessary to warn others who may be inclined to pursue the same fatuous pathway.

What was the sequel? In my distress some of my Christian friends pointed me to Jesus Christ,

and assured me that they knew by experience that He was worthy of all confidence. I went to Christ. I said, "I will trust Thee, O Christ, if Thou wilt give the assurance of truth!" And He did not fail me! He did not disappoint me! I found His promises to be "Yea" and "Amen." My reader-friend, if you have never tried Him, try Him *now*. "Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good."

There is still another important count in favour of Christian faith: it transfigures life and character; it makes people over; it converts them into "new creatures in Christ Jesus;" it lifts them up out of the old, sinful life into a higher, purer life. Glance through the history of "twice-born men" and note the power of the Gospel of faith in Jesus Christ.

There was Paul—what kind of a man was he before he had accepted Christ? What, after he had accepted Him? Note the transformation. And was it not a change to a better and a nobler life? Justin Martyr was a philosopher. He sought satisfaction for his inquiring soul in nearly all the philosophies of his day—all but Epicureanism, which was too coarse for him. But he found no peace. At length an aged Christian told him of Christ, whom he accepted by faith; and the proud philosopher was converted into a noble Christian who became the great apologist of the Early Church, and finally

died bravely as a martyr of the faith. Augustine was converted from a dissolute to a saintly life. Martin Luther sought peace of conscience in all sorts of penance and so-called "works of righteousness." Yet in vain! But when God put into his mind the saying of Holy Scripture, "The just shall live by faith," Luther sprang to his feet a redeemed and transfigured man; and then and there the great Protestant Reformation was born.

Time would fail me to call the long roll of the men who were made anew through faith in Christ; but some of them were John Newton, John Bunyan, Rowland Hill, Charles Spurgeon, Thomas Chalmers, Richard Baxter, Philip Doddridge, Jerry McAuley, Phillips Brooks and Dwight L. Moody. These are among the "heroes of faith" who conquered kingdoms and wrought wonders. "Seeing, then, that we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith."

Have you ever known such transformation to take place through doubt—I mean doubt of Christ and the Bible? Where, in the course of human history do you read of people having been born again, having passed from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God; having been saved from a bad life to a life of holiness, through



the writings and influence of the skeptics of the ages, from Celsus and Porphyry in the early days of Christianity down to the very latest assailant of the Christian religion? Nay, it is faith that is constructive; doubt is merely *destructive*. Whatever occurs in our lives, let us have and keep faith in God, and in Christ, and in the Bible. Thomas Carlyle was an erratic genius. He had many a wrestling match with doubt. Perhaps he never became what we would call an evangelical believer. Sometimes he would talk like one, and then again he would express his agnosticism with much vehemence. But once he said a great thing, it was this: "If you have anything that you really believe, let me know what it is. If you have any doubts, keep them to yourself, I have enough of my own!" It was the admission of a gifted soul that doubt is unsatisfying and destructive of joy and assurance. The soul craves certitude, which it can attain only through faith in Jesus Christ, who said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me."

"Oh, for a faith that will not shrink,  
 Though pressed by every foe;  
 That will not tremble on the brink  
 Of any earthly woe!

That will not murmur nor complain  
 Beneath the chastening rod,

But in the hour of grief and pain  
Will lean upon its God.

A faith that keeps the narrow way  
Till life's last hour is fled,  
And with a pure and heavenly ray  
Lights up a dying bed.

Lord, give us such a faith as this,  
And then whate'er may come,  
We'll taste e'en here the hallowed bliss  
Of our eternal home."

## VII

### THE LORD'S SONG IN A STRANGE LAND

BISHOP FRANCIS J. McCONNELL

*"How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?"*—PSALM 137:4.

THE words of the Psalm which I use as a text set forth the feelings of Israelites captive in Babylon when the Babylonians asked them to sing one of the songs of Zion. The Psalm itself breathes resentment against Babylon. In part, it is one of those imprecatory psalms which offend the Christian conscience of to-day. The essential meaning of the question, "How can we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?" is not set aside, however, when we declare that we cannot sanction such bitterness as marks the utterance of Israel's poet. If there had been no deep enmity between the Israelites and the Babylonians the question would have still been pertinent. Babylon was heathen, and would have been heathen even if there had been friendly international relations between Babylon and Israel.

It was not possible to sing the Lord's song in a strange land and do justice to the song. Everything which the singer would see would be a re-

minder of heathenism—the temples, the idols, the habits of the people. To sing the Lord's song in a heathen land would have indeed been a protest against heathenism, but it would not have been a rendering of the song true to the nature of the song itself. The song was written for the land of the Lord.

The thought I wish to present is that the message of the Lord can be understood only in the land of the Lord, and that taking the text for its suggestiveness, for our time, we must say that the Gospel song can be sung only in a land which has become the land of the Lord.

### *Lofty Religious Messages*

The songs of Israel were lofty religious messages, set to poetry and to music. They were not songs sung just for their tunes. Their chief feature was their meaning. The land of Babylon contradicted everything in the songs of Zion. As an example, take any message from any of the great Psalms of Israel! We will not stop here to raise any question as to whether the particular psalm was in the possession of Israel in Babylon or not; but let us take a passage which in substance was expressive of Israel's thought from the early days, namely, "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and they that dwell therein." Imagine singing that verse in Babylon! It would have meant: "Babylon is the Lord's and

the fullness thereof; Babylon and all that dwell therein." Now, Israel believed that of Babylon—but Babylon didn't believe it. Israel was willing to say that to Babylon, but singing such a song as that back at Jerusalem where the hearers believed it, and singing it in Babylon where the hearers denied it, were different performances, with all the difference between singing to an applauding audience and singing to a jeering audience. No one can ever say that Israel showed any tendency to compromise on the message of the Lord; still songs like "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof" were not intended as war songs. They implied acceptance and approval by the hearers.

Everything in Babylon, I repeat, contradicted the song of Zion. How could the singers sing with the Babylonian soldiers returning from campaigns of conquest with the loot and slaves in their possession? Were the soldiers the agents of Israel's Lord? Was all the wealth in the Babylonian market place really the property of Israel's Lord? To all these questions the Israelite would sturdily have said "Yes," but this avowal would have been met with roars of derisive laughter. Now, the religion of the Lord shows splendidly when it defies the religion of the heathen. We must keep this undaunted defiance in mind when we are tempted to condemn too severely the bitterness of the imprecatory Psalms. Still, the songs of the

Lord are not primarily songs of defiance. They look forward to a time when they shall be sung by mighty choruses, with vast multitudes shouting approval, on a stage where everything is set to make the meaning of the psalm clear.

### *Babylon Compared With America*

We have come a long way from the days of Babylon, but even this land in which we live is pagan enough to make it hard to sing the Lord's song, almost as hard as to sing "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof" in Babylon. The testimony of all Christian workers is that the great obstacle to the understanding of the Gospel is the flat contradiction between the Gospel and the obvious features of the paganism of our day. Any way of life which does not centre itself upon the Christ-likeness of God is pagan. It is hard to preach the Gospel to paganism, whether in Babylon or in America. "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth," sings the Gospel—and Babylon of to-day laughs. Suppose we look at the great lords of industry who almost literally possess the earth to-day. Are they the meek? A distinguished publicist some time ago told us that this means meekness in presence of natural and economic laws which the industrial leader has somehow learned to obey better than the others of us. This might apply to the farmer meekly obeying the laws of seed-time and harvest, but how

does it fit the industrial and financial leader? Does he become meek in the sense of the Sermon on the Mount by obedience to the law of murderous competition? Does the law of the survival of the fittest as stated in industrial terms mean meekness in Christ's sense?

No! There is enough of contradiction between our modern methods of getting money to take all the meaning out of the Lord's song. So with the contradiction between the Lord's song as to the worth of men as sons of God and the cynical system which in any realm reduces men to tools or things. Think of the international situation. For two thousand five hundred years the song of the Lord has been a song of peace, culminating in the angel song of Peace on Earth. How can we sing that song with battleships looming now at target practice, with politicians shouting for preparedness campaigns, with leaders of nations talking about the "next war"? Let but some humble preacher of the Gospel hint that the song of the Lord is to be taken seriously and the effect is about the same as if Babylon had been asked to take seriously the Israelite's song, "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof."

The Babylonian might have professed admiration for the music as music and for the poetry as poetry, but he would have flown into rage at a prosaic suggestion to use Babylon as the property of the Lord. So our Gospel songs of peace thrill

our hearts as music and poetry, but the prosaic hint that the longest single stride toward making the lands the Lord's lands is to stop fighting is met by snarls of Babylonian rage.

*Reveal the Truth, Preach the Gospel*

There is in some quarters, to-day, a tendency to draw a line against social evangelism on the part of the Church, as if such evangelism were a sort of addition to the real task of the Church, without any direct bearing on the chief message of Christianity. It may, indeed, be that some social workers proceed in such fashion as to lend colour to this assumption, but the large social aim which would make over the institutions of a land to bring them in harmony with the Gospel message is distinctly in line with the central purpose of that message itself. To clear a land of the contradictions against the Gospel song is to give that song its chance. The duty of the Church is to reveal the truth, to preach the Gospel, to sing the song.

Anything that helps the utterance helps the message. The servant of the Gospel who goes forth so to transform the institutions of a land as to lift them out of paganism is working for the Gospel message. The man who fights to rid industry of injustice, or to give a racial group a better human chance, or to do away with war, is working directly for a hearing for the Gospel message. If



the contradictions of the Lord's song can be removed from the Lord's land the gain to the song itself will be immense.

I repeat that the worth of the Gospel lies in the positive content of the Gospel itself. Christianity is indeed a militant religion, but it is to be deplored that thus far the emphasis has necessarily been so completely on the militant aspects that other and more important aspects have not had their chance. Israel's leaders refused to sing the song of the Lord in a heathen land, but others have sung that song in a strange land, always with inspiring effect because of the sheer heroism of the singers. In such, however, the very fact that the singers have to be heroes may detract from the power of the song, as sung naturally and spontaneously in the home of its friends. There is a factor of sheer size and volume in the Gospel message, too, which does not get its chance except from the singing of the whole population of the Lord's land. A handful of singers standing by one of the rivers of Babylon might have indeed sung with plaintive wistfulness one of the songs of Zion, but it would have required all the population of Jerusalem to put into one of the songs of Zion the force that belonged there.

### *Volume of Song Depends Upon the Chorus*

It was a great multitude that no man could number, of all nations and kindreds and peoples

and tongues, that cried with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb." We are told the number of voices, "ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands," who sang "Worthy is the Lamb." We know how in that powerful message in Handel's *Messiah*, "His name shall be called Wonderful"—the volume depends upon the size of the chorus. The Lord's song cannot be revealed in its own inherent power till the chorus comprises the total population of the Lord's land. To some it seems that it is not quite fair to the qualitative fineness of the Gospel to speak thus in quantitative terms and that qualitative fineness stands in its own right.

Let us remind ourselves that while this is true it is also true that the finest thoughts appear in lands where the most people are thinking, that the finest art appears in lands where all the people crave revelation of beauty; that the finest spiritual attainments of individuals are reached in lands where the most people are striving after righteousness. The exquisite fineness of the Lord's song will never appear till it is the expression of the public sentiment of the land which is the Lord's. The argument can be made for the social type of Christianity that it gives the individual his chance. This means more than the removal of artificial hindrances to liberty. It means especially that a widely diffused Christian spirit makes an atmos-

phere which calls out the rarest and finest powers of the individual.

In a community filled with the musical spirit the individual musical genius gets his chance. The Book of Revelation tells us that in his experiences of transport into the realm of the last things, the seer heard a new song. Any song of the Gospel which we now sing will be new in a land wholly the Lord's, sung by a people wholly the Lord's, in an atmosphere surcharged with the spirit of the Lord. The Gospel will be new in that its content will appear in other than its militant aspects, new in the power which the public opinion of a redeemed humanity will put into it, new in the hitherto unsuspected beauties which a genial social atmosphere will reveal.

## VIII

### JESUS, THE PLEDGE OF MAN'S LORDSHIP OVER LIFE

WILLIAM PIERSON MERRILL, D. D.

*"But we see Jesus."*—HEBREWS 2: 9.

**T**HESE words clearly imply that there is something else we do *not* see. And that is in fact the very statement the writer is making. There is something else of which he is compelled to say, "We do not see it yet"; and then, in sharp contrast, he throws out the strong statement, "But we *do* see Jesus." What is it of which he says that we do not yet see it? It is the hope of *man's lordship over life*. Man is a poor creature, weak and small as compared with other animals, infinitely weaker and smaller as compared with the vast forces of nature. He spends his few years fighting for his life; and death always wins. What is man? A poor creature, the sport of wind and lightning, of disease-germ and hidden plague, with the destructive forces even more potent lodged within his own soul. He appears for a little, and then vanishes away, like a cloud.

Yet the soul of man has ever been haunted with a sense of potential greatness, of coming lordship. "Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands," sings the Psalmist, recalling an earlier poem in which the Creator tells man that he is to have the dominion over all of life. Man is heir to the lordship of life. Its riches are for him to acquire and use; its forces are for him to master and control. He is like a child on a vast estate, lost in its greatness, but knowing himself to be heir to its richness. Man is meant to be master of life. There are times when it seems that he has come far on his way to the throne. Looking back, we see the mighty gains he has made through the ages. Once he was hunted by wild beasts, escaping only by nimble wit from their superior strength. He has cleared the earth of those enemies, taming some of them to be his servants and friends, keeping others to serve his pleasure when he would do some hunting on his own part. Once he had no dwelling but a cave, claimed and held against some earlier occupant, a rough home.

Now he builds wonderful palaces of comfort, where light springs forth at his touch, and heat at the turn of a hand; where water flows at his pleasure and convenience and comfort are served in profusion. Once he cowered in the presence of titanic forces—wind, lightning, tempest. He has begun to learn their ways, can read the courses

of the winds, has made the lightning his amazingly useful and indispensable servant, to carry him and his words at incredible speed and to unmeasured distances. Menaced always by disease he has set himself to probe the causes of ill-health, and is carrying on a winning fight, in a world hidden from the eye, against the tiny germs that are so much more to be dreaded than the wild beasts that hunted him in earlier times. He has analyzed common substances, and found new ways of combining their constituent parts, so that a profusion of new and exceedingly useful material has come to enrich his life. Not content with this earth, he has devised instruments by which he may come to know the secrets of the stars. The universe unfolds its meanings to him more and more with each succeeding year. He is becoming indeed the lord of life, the master of the world and its forces. The prophecy is being fulfilled that was voiced by the ancient seer, "Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet."

Set man as he is to-day beside the cave man in his weakness and loneliness, and truly he is seen to have travelled far toward that goal of mastery. And yet—has he gone very far? It was easy to think so in the opening years of this century, when we looked every day for the announcement of some brilliant new discovery which meant the mastery of another force of nature, or the turning of it to

a new usefulness. The course of human life then seemed a straight, wide, brightly lighted boulevard leading to the palace where man should reign, acknowledged lord over life. Then came doubts and questions. Those gifted with farsight or with insight have felt them all the way along.

Was man after all gaining in mastery over the facts of life? Or was he, like Ancient Rome, conquering one province after another, only to be called upon to defend an ever-extending boundary line? Did not every problem solved drag along in its wake a dozen other and harder ones? He was harnessing mighty forces; could he control them? Faster and vaster grew the world of man's knowledge; was he big enough to dominate it? On such questions the war has shed a lurid light. Is man the master of these great forces, or their slave? He has found out how to dig iron out of the rocks, how to make it hard and yet elastic, how to shape and mould it; and it blows him to bits and batters his towns and cathedrals into ruins. He has learned how to find gold and silver and jewels; and the result is organized rapacity. With splendid intelligence and audacity he has learned to fly like a bird; and he uses his new power to drop explosives on helpless towns, and talks of dropping disease germs and devastating poisons that will in a moment wipe great cities off the face of the earth. *Master* of chemistry, is he, of electricity, of finance, of organization, of natural

and social forces? Or is he only finding every year new forces to enslave and curse him, until at last they shall overwhelm him?

That strange soul, Henry Adams, has said some startling things that come near to voicing the secret doubts and fears of our time. I suppose few have come upon his words about "The virgin and the dynamo" without being repelled, or even shocked, at the unnatural yoking of two discordant facts or forces. Yet who can read his words with care, and meditate upon their real meaning, and not feel that the man has touched on real and deep issues of our present life? Once man's chief object of interest was a tender, beautiful ideal of womanliness, of motherhood, of grace, appealing to the spiritual and aesthetic elements of his nature. Now it is the *machine* that fills the foreground of his thought, impersonal, vast, mysterious, terrifying natural force. It can be marvelously used; but is it his slave, or his master? The very heart of our time cries out through his *Hymn to the Dynamo*.

"Mysterious Power! Gentle friend!  
Despotic Master! Tireless Force!  
You and We are near the end.  
Either You or We must bend  
To bear the martyr's cross.

We know ourselves, what we can bear  
As men; our strength and weakness too;  
Down to the fraction of a hair;



And know that we with all our care  
And knowledge, know not you.

We know not whether you are kind,  
Or cruel in your fiercer mood;  
But be you Matter, be you Mind,  
We think we know that you are blind,  
And we alone are good."

How far man has gone! Yes! But toward mastery or toward slavery? Here is the truth of which we are increasingly sure; man can never come to his true lordship over life merely along the path of growing mastery of natural force. For every new fact or force uncovered or devised waits for the soul of man to give it a meaning, to decide whether it shall be a blessing or a curse, a beneficent servant or a despotic master, a power to lift him nearer Heaven, or to drag him toward hell. We are beginning to see that all the marvelous progress that marks the nineteenth century, and makes it glorious above other ages, may be only the unchanging of facts and forces too mighty for man to cope with and control. Has man harnessed the horses of the sun to his chariot, and are they running away with him? We are readier far than we were a dozen, or a score of years ago, to agree with the writer of this second chapter of Hebrews, when he says, "We see, not yet, all things put under his feet."

Man is like the fisherman in the *Arabian Nights*; he has let the genie out of the box; he cannot put

him back in the box again; and he is far from sure that he will not be destroyed by the force he has released. "We see, not yet, all things put under him; *but* we see Jesus"! Friends, have we begun to realize what it means to be a Christian in such a day as this? The man who wrote this letter to the Hebrews had a vivid sense of what it meant to be a Christian in that day. It was a time not unlike our own, a period of disenchantment and disillusionment; yet a period of new stirrings, of restless ambitions, vast hopes, release of new forces. Old things were passing away; all things were becoming new; and, as always, those who were satisfied with the old thought the world was going to smash. There was a bitter sense that the promises had failed. It seemed a mockery to read the words, "Thou hast put all things under his feet." Why, the very people of God were under the feet of Rome, trodden down by ruthless imperialism. How could they longer hope or dream about the lordship of man over life? They could not, if they looked only at the facts of their present human living. "But we see Jesus."

"We see Jesus," and in Him we see One who is plainly the Master over life. There is no question in His case which is Master and which servant. Facts and forces may do much to Him. They may thwart Him, make Him suffer and agonize, make His path the shadowed way of one "despised and rejected, a man of sorrows and ac-

quainted with grief"; they may kill Him after a few brief years; but one thing they cannot do, they cannot *master* Him. He is Lord, and every tongue must confess it, every knee must bow to Him. Their very malice and hatred only serve to lift Him higher. Every opposing force becomes His servant, willing and unwilling, to carry Him on to His throne. The very Cross, thrust at Him as the culmination of shame, becomes a glory, the symbol of the redeeming love of God, and of the infinite possibilities of good and of salvation in every human life.

"We see Jesus," Master of life, Lord of all things. However the promise may seem to fail in us and for us, it comes to glorious fulfillment in Him. Think for a moment of this miracle of Jesus. Take it, if you please, at its simplest, lowest terms. There are some, I suppose, who do not, and think they cannot, take Jesus as super-human, the Son of God in some metaphysical sense. He is to them just a figure in history, and that more or less vague in outline. They are inclined to believe that much of the conventional idea of Jesus is really the thoughts of men hung upon a very simple human figure. Well, take it so. Grant, for the moment, that Jesus was just a great-souled, daring, lovable leader, put to death in His thirties, about whom gathered tales of miracle and speculation of heavenly origin, and a vast mass of glory and honour. Does that nullify or destroy the fun-

damental wonder of the whole affair, the miracle that is a thousand times more wonderful than turning water into wine, or walking on the water, or making dead men alive,—the miracle of His great and growing mastery over life? Can you not see, must you not admit, that the more simple you make Him, the more stupendous grows the wonder of His influence over the life of the world?

Whatever He was, this is what He is, this ideal to which millions look as their guiding star, this teacher to whose words of wisdom and life the nations turn more and more, this spirit dwelling in the hearts of men and in their fellowships, all this which we call "Christ" and "Christianity," the most vital, dominant force in the world to-day, to which more and more men and women turn as their best hope, irrespective of their relation to the church and to orthodox theology. Talk about miracles! Say you cannot accept them because they lie in the past and cannot be verified by experience. *This* miracle is here to-day, a fact in experience; the miracle of the persistent lordship of Jesus. If all others have failed, He has not failed. Looking at ourselves and at others, we doubt man's lordship over life. Looking at Him, we know that His mastery is supreme and sure. But, in seeing Jesus we see something more than His individual supremacy. We see in Jesus the pledge and assurance of that mastery of man for which we long, of which so often we despair.

“We see not yet all things put under his feet; but we see Jesus.” Really to see Jesus, to understand at all what He stands for and means in the progress of the race, is to see clearly revealed the way by which man may surely come to mastery over the facts and forces of the world. What Jesus was, He was not for Himself, but for every man. Christian-thinkers, through all the ages, have been so captivated by the thought that Jesus is the revelation of God that they have barely noticed the equally great and necessary fact, that Jesus is the revelation of man. Yet there is nothing surer in Heaven or earth than that, if once all men began to take the way of Jesus as their actual way of living, humanity would quickly surmount all the obstacles that daunt us, move out from the sad and dismal facts that surround us, and move on to that lordship over life for which God made us. Out of the rich number and variety of elements in which Jesus means, take three great meanings, Service, Co-operation, and the Predominance of the Spiritual. On those lines Jesus lived and taught and worked; on those lines His kingdom has got forward. Once let men really put their life,—not only their personal living, but their collective living—on those lines, and man would soon take his place as master of life, heir of God, and joint-heir with Christ.

*Service* is a keynote of Christ and of true Christianity. We can never remind ourselves too often

that the greatness of Jesus lies largely here, that, finding in the intellectual and religious heritage of His race two great ideals, that of the conqueror and that of the servant, He lifted up, exemplified, and glorified the ideal of the servant, and did it so magnificently that He was able to annex to it and to subordinate to it the ideal of the Messiah also, making men see in Him that the highest greatness is the greatness of human serviceableness. Along that path lies man's way to real greatness and mastery. Only a servant can ever mount and hold the throne. These gigantic forces and resources that threaten to overwhelm and enslave the soul of man can be met and mastered only by those who eagerly seize them in order that they may the better serve men thereby, and make human life richer and more worth while. Given self-interest as the dominant motive in a man or in a nation, and all the wealth and glory of modern discovery and science is a growing curse. But given *service* as the supreme motive, all that one can learn, or discover, or gain, becomes a glory, a step toward real lordship over life.

*Co-operation* is a keynote of Christ and of true Christianity. The very centre of Christianity is fellowship, brotherhood. It has been truly said that one cannot live a genuinely Christian life alone. Jesus brought and brings men together that they may together do what they could not do separately. Here is the very principle for want

of which our modern world limps in pain, or halts in doubt. The truth is that we have come upon a world too huge for man to handle on an individual basis. We ask uneasily why it is that no great leaders appear. Is it not just because no one can be big enough to handle the gigantic situations of the modern world? The most conspicuous failures of our time are those in which men have tried to play the game alone. It cannot be done. There are no supermen; and even the greatest of plain men is too small to run the world's affairs.

That means that the only way out is through co-operation on a scale undreamed of as yet. There must be general subordination of private advantage to public good, generous willingness to work with others, a temper that fits in with the views and aims of other people, the merging of one's self in a common spirit. What an impossible remedy that seems, as we think of the clash of individual opinions, the strife of parties and races, the fierce flaming up of the dying embers of group interest, the recrudescence of nationalism, the revival of theological smallness, that have followed the war. If co-operation is the way to man's mastery of life, then surely "we see not yet all things put under his feet." "*But we see Jesus.*" His spirit is the spirit that unites men, the spirit that forgives, that takes large views, that holds men and races together in a common brotherhood. He did it, in that first century, despite Roman insolence, and

Greek superciliousness, and Jewish intolerance; somehow He built a brotherhood that made men *one* in Him; and just so far as men took that way of loving co-operation, just so far man moved on toward realizing his lordship over life. In Jesus we see the way we must take, the way of love and comradeship.

*The predominance of the spiritual.* Here is also a keynote of Christ and of true Christianity. "What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own self?" Christ is always asking that question; and always there is but one answer. In Jesus' estimate of values, only one is supreme, the spiritual. To Him, God is above all; and man's sense of God is the greatest of gifts. If we see Jesus, we see *that*. Imagine Jesus here among us, we eagerly showing Him all the wonders of our civilization. He would be interested. He would know that all our fascinating progress had come because He set free the spirit of man to roam fearlessly through the universe of God. But, all through, you know and I know, if we know Jesus at all, that this would be the question by which the Master would test the value of every advance, of every discovery, of every bit of modern knowledge. "What has this done to your sense of God? Do you see Him better, love Him better? Are you more sure of the unseen realities?" Friends, if we would master our modern world, and not be enslaved by it, we must recover



and reassert our sense of God, our clear perception of the predominance of spiritual realities and values.

There is a great phrase in which Paul describes a Christian as one who is "alive unto God." That is what it should mean to be a Christian, to be responsive to God as a musical temperament is to music, to tingle with the sense of His presence, to see Him in all things, so that—to use another of Paul's great sayings—"all things are of God." We take God too much as an abstract consideration, a postulate in theology, not as the very centre and heart and fibre of all our living. Such is Jesus, and such His meaning for our life. Only a part of it, three colours from the spectrum of His marvelous light,—but how wonderful it is! To live every day, and, so far and so fast as we can, to put our *collective* living in the light of these three great principles of service, co-operation, and the predominance of the spiritual,—that would set us far on toward mastery of the world that now threatens to dominate us. "The Lord is the spirit," and only in the spirit of Christ can we achieve our lordship over life.

What we need is to commit ourselves to this way of the Master, to trust wholly in the forces to which He trusted. We must come to-day as the Greeks came to Andrew and Philip, saying, "We would see Jesus." What we need, what we must have, is a new and true vision of Him, not as a

figure in history, nor as a factor in theology, but as the Lord of life, the pledge and assurance to us that mankind can and will come to its long dreamed of, oft despaired of lordship over life, only through Jesus and by His way. It is a hard, bitter, complex, defiant world we are facing to-day. Man stands in dread of the machines he has made, the world he has built, lest they override him and he become their slave rather than their master. But the world can be overcome. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world,—but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" "*But we see Jesus.*" We hear Him cry, "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world"; and we know that the victory is ours, if we follow Him. God keep our eyes open to see Jesus, and Jesus only, until we are ready to go on with Him, and so at last to reign with Him, our Lord, and the Lord of all.

## IX

### A LORD'S DAY PASTORAL

BISHOP WILLIAM A. QUAYLE

"*The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.*"  
—PSALM 23:1.

THESE are some things we never can grow tired of. One thing is the kiss of love; and one thing is the shadows cast in quiet water; and one thing is the blowing of the spring wind's breath; and one thing is the companionship of those we love; and one thing is a love story. I read Crockett's *The Standard Bearer*, and, as usual with him, the battle jostles and life is very strenuous; but, likewise, as is usual with him, life is very tender and very sweet. And I think some of the most pious of pious reading is a sweet love story, because it always refreshes our best life to know that the sweetest things we have ever told about love are not quite the truth. They are always short of the truth. We never get tired of a love story. And one of the things we never get tired of is the Shepherd Psalm. More people love that poem than any poem ever written. More people know that poem than any poem that was ever written. Dr. Maclure was not the first man nor the last that, dying, limped his way through the poem of the Shepherd Psalm. People have

read or repeated it with the rain of many tears dashing in their faces. People have loved that poem and have repeated it with the wildest winds of trouble that ever blew blowing on them. People have put that poem underneath their tired head for a sleeping pillow. People have leaned on that poem for a staff better than alpenstock when they climbed the winter mountains. People have had that poem when their way was black and very arduous. Oh, hearts, this is God's pastoral.

Some long since poet—he of the harp and the shepherd's voice and the shining eyes and bounding steps—he saw it and felt it, and then did like all poets do—said the thing he saw and felt, and that is the Shepherd's Psalm. It is very, very sweet and it is very, very tender. I don't know anything that I think is as tender as this Shepherd Psalm, except a hand reaching out in the dark of the night when you moan in your bed, and the hand reaches out and touches you. I wonder if there is any one in this company who at some time or other has not had some dear and forgetful hand reach out in the dark when you moaned a little and touched you and gave you a pat or two and said: "Sick, dear? Sick, dear?" And the hand that touched you—I am not asking where it is now—but it was tender, wasn't it? So tender! And this poem is tender like that; and my purpose is to see if that Shepherd hand cannot get hold of every one of us so that, please God, we

might all be led into green pastures and keep quiet beside still waters.

I want, in the language of the fields and of the spring, to let this poem of the spring and of the fields invade your life. So many of us are from the country, and so many of you love it. The other night I was speaking somewhere, and a Kansas girl came to me after the meeting was over. "Oh," she said, "it is so nice to see some one from Kansas." It *was* nice. I liked it myself. I think she thought I looked a little like the greenery of the prairie. I didn't mind. There are times when we all of us have the itch to be out of doors. Say, beloved, who's blowing the tiny leaves now? Why, the south wind's blowing now. Who's beckoning with winsome fingers now? Why, spring is beckoning with winsome fingers now. This is a poem of the springtime. "The Lord is my shepherd: I shall not want." So, in plain countryman's words, with the tang of the fields I trust, and the smell of growing things, and the winsome call of the bird that has come back to sing and say, "The winter hath altogether vanished," I want to talk with you on this Lord's Day pastoral about the Shepherd and the sheep. The Shepherd leads his flock outdoors. Sometimes the sheep do not know about it—more's the pity; but the Shepherd is bound for the out of doors. Out of the inclosure to the great uninclosed fields out of doors.

That is where the pasture is. That is where the

water runnels sing. That is where the daisies are abloom. That is where the splendour of the sunshine washes all the hills. That is where, down the wide, leaning floor of the far-off river, the swaying springtime grasses toss to bloom and beauty. Out of doors. The Lord is my Shepherd. And He is leading us out of doors. The perception of the world and the wonder of the out of doors I think is a strange impress of the hand of God. That's where He wants folks to go—out of doors. We are so shut in. We are so cluttered up. We are so crowded. Oh, the out-of-doors. But the Shepherd of the sheep beckons, and if you will follow the Lord your Shepherd you will find that sometimes, anyhow, He will lead you out of doors.

The other day the Shepherd beckoned at my door—the good and gracious Lord Shepherd—and I went down the country way, for I had seen in the winter a stream that I thought, when springtime came, would be a bounty of beauty. And I was not amiss in my judgment. And I came to where the stream was running vagabondwise, and where the wind was blowing turbulently, like March winds, and where the elm trees were springing out into promise of green and not the achievements of it, and where the plum trees were stooped under their perfume and bloom, and where the greensward was all flamed out with dandelion. And I found a bank against the blowing wind; and I found a bank all set to violets; and I made

my fire with driftwood and lay on the smoke side of the fire, so that the smoke blew in my face.

Ah, it was so good to get the breath of forests that had been and were not now. And, lying on the greensward, elbow deep in violets and violets flaming blue under my eye—oh, God's out of doors! And the winds sobbed and sung, and madrigals wafted out on the winds and the sky, flapped like eagles; and to the rim of the earth the trees swayed and stood upright and swayed; and all the gales called: "Spring cometh! Spring cometh!" And I lay on my bed of violets, with the yellow and the splendour of the dandelion just beyond and the perfume of the incense of the fire in my nostrils. And the Good Shepherd had brought me hither. And I made my prayer and I sang my psalm.

God wants people out of doors. And since Jesus spent so much time out of doors till His face had the touch of the wind and the rain on it, I should think that people who love to know Him would follow Him into the out-of-doors where God is working the miracle of the spring and where His fragrances are distilled. Do you know why Robert Browning's *Saul* grips so many people? A good many people don't like Robert Browning. Why? Because so many don't know him. Some school-master introduced him with a ferrule and a book. But if you will go out with Robert Browning and lie around loose with him, kick your heels up with

him and tumble around with him, do the "boy act" in the woods with him, you will love him. But so many people who don't care for anything other of Browning love *Saul*. Why? Well, one reason, I think, is that it has in it the wonder of the out-of-doors. Robert Browning is not an out-of-doors poet. He is a psychic poet. He is the profoundest digger into the soul since Shakespeare, and in some regards a profounder digger than Shakespeare. But this psychological poet in *Saul* revels in the out-of-doors. Upon my heart, when I read it I see the beckoning hills and I hear the sound of water trickling, I hear the calling of the winds.

I see the multitude of lambs bleating for their mothers. Out of doors, oh, my soul! There is a great patch of outdoors in front of everybody's house, and I not only think, but I know, that everybody owes it to his religious nature to learn that the Good Shepherd beckons out of doors. Do you know that the outdoors doesn't wait? Tomorrow the lilacs will be sputtering out of bloom and the day after some other thing will be rushing into bloom. You have got to take nature while nature hastes. Nature won't sit still, prim and puckered, like a man having his photograph taken. It will not. You cannot get nature to sit down by saying, "Keep still; don't budge." Nature won't keep still. A man will be still and frozen up as in a refrigerator process, but nature won't.



You must get nature on the wing. Oh life, oh life, the Shepherd whose name is God is going out of doors. Go out with Him.

The trouble with a good many people who go out of doors is they go out with a botanist. That is bad. Don't do that unless you are studying botany, and are willing to take the consequences. Some people go out of doors with an ornithologist. That is enough to shake anybody's faith in man and bird. Don't do that. Go out with the bird-ologist. That's better. Go out and watch the black crow talk back. Go out and watch the spurt of fire on the robin's breast—and ask him who painted it? Go out and ask the bobolink where he learned to spill his strange music out? Go out and see the flowers blooming. Don't ask them their names. Some of them don't know; they are ignorant flowers. Some of them are like girls getting ready to be married—they don't know quite everything. Go out and see things out of doors.

I have seen many people go out in a sheep's pasture and say, "What is this sheep's name?" And the sheep would bleat at them, and it was a becoming bleat. It wasn't wasted. Things like that ought to be bleated at. We don't so much care about names as things. The Shepherd leads His flock out of doors; and He will lead us so. And then the Shepherd leads His flock out of the house, out and up to where there is sky. Houses, all of them, have low-roofed rooms. I am not

faulting it; I am talking about it. Some of them that have very low roofs are so cozy in winter. I like them because it reduces coal bills and increases warmth. Some of them are very high. I have been in cathedrals whose great domes ran up like to the sky; and I have been in kings' palaces lacerated with the years, but spacious kings' palaces; but they were roofed. And you had to have a window to look into the sky.

When the Good Shepherd comes He leads His flocks out to the sky where it is all window, spacious, strangely beautiful. Go out where you can see spaces, and out where you can feel spaces. On a morning mankind never can choose to forget the Creator. The heavens and the sky are wider than we thought, the sky has grown so strangely wide and winsome and wonderful. That is what we are needing, to be beckoned up. We are tied down like tethered eagles; we are put into narrow places of vocation, like poor canaries that are put into little houses down in the bird store—houses no bigger than your two clenched fists. Canaries were meant, they were meant, to baffle the winds with their yellow wings, and to toss their bird music into the sky. And we are meant to be out where there is room for growth, and out where there is room for song and out where the eternal wonder of the universe can come and kiss us on the lips, and have no door bell for the ringing and no low-roofed room to make souls stoop for the coming in.

God, I take it, is always shepherding us to take us out, out into the spaciousness of life, out till we feel the world is a little space, till we feel we can ram our arm through the breadth of the world and grasp the world and wear it on the arm as a shield. That is how it comes to pass that men grow great. They come to feel there is no locality that we do not live at any particular town, but everywhere on the earth. Men and women, if you never felt life's cramp, I miss my guess. You felt that life was cramped, and you had been thrust out from spaciousness into lack of space. Oh, God, call us, beckon us out where there is room and high sky, and night and day sky, and sky eternal.

Then a curious thing, I think, about the Shepherd lets his sheep out into the storm. I suppose that has caused more thought than any other single fact of life—this, that we are led out into the storm. I suppose that has caused more exclamatory and deeper grieving in good men's lives and good women's lives than any single thing in Christianity. Perchance they feel that as the Lord was their Shepherd so should they be led away from storms. But the Shepherd leads His sheep out into storms. I was one time in a room a hundred feet above the earth, and a chimney-swift had found his foolish way into the room; and from scratchings on the window it was very apparent that all the day, and maybe days, he had tried to find his way through the window into the sky.

And I chanced to come there late one night and found the swift baffled with the light I held in my hand; and my heart was so sore with pity for the baffled bird I climbed and caught the trembling bit of bird and feathers in my hand and opened the window and dropped him out into the out-of-doors for which he was meant, and where his life was. Out from death, I put him into life.

But he turned his face my way and saw the flicker of the light and flew back in. And so he did time and again, not knowing that the sky was his place, that the sky was about him, and not the peril of a hundred feet below. He had wings, but didn't try them. But at last I took the tremulous bird and flung him out into the sky, black and starless, and unlit by any lamp, and closed the window. And did you not observe that by my throwing him out into the sky I did not hurt him, but saved him? God must do that with us. Sometimes we think our safety is our home. What I am saying to the praise of God is that sometimes He casts us out into jeopardy; because God is more concerned about our strength and our service and our enlarged life than He is that we have no peril. Oh, heart, how you ache! Did God send the ache? No. But God let you out where the ache was. There are worse troubles than heart-aches. Say, heart, have you been scuffed by the storm? Has the rose you held withered while you held it? Has your heart's blood spurted out, so

deep was the wound in your heart? And sometimes you gasp for breath and cry, "If God help me not, I die!" What does the Shepherd do? Head you out where the storms are. And I have seen, as some of you may have seen, on the Scotch hills, when the rain was drizzling hard and the fogs had wrapped themselves around the mountains, I have seen the shepherds standing amidst the drench of the rain, not taking the flock out of the storm, but staying with the flock in the storm. The shepherd takes his flock out where the winds may be hard and the fury may be very pitiless, but that is where we are meant to be. And if you think that God is trying the conservatory plan on your heart, you misunderstand Him.

In the conservatory they shut out the storm and baffle the winds, and what they grow is flowers that the first spring breath, leaning to kiss them, would break. But God leads His flock out where the winds are wildest and the storms are hardest and the fury seems like the fury of destruction. And God is concerned not that we get on easily, but that we get on to something. It is better, men and women, I will tell you, to get out where the tempest blows worst, and to feel that you are meant for it, and that you can meet it nor it need to master you—better than to be sheltered about by eternal calm. So the Shepherd's method is to lead us out into the storm and put a calm in us and not us in the calm. And when I have

thought of that, as I have many, many times, particularly when I have seen good men and women buffeted, when I have seen scars on many faces, when I have fairly seen the pincers of pain plucking at the face, when I have seen people put on the rack, when I have been fairly amazed at it, then I have seen that God was not keeping us too closely sheltered. He is keeping us in the storm and in the calm. Out in the storm! Oh Shepherd, fetch us home! Oh Shepherd, the wind blows bleak, fetch us home! Oh Shepherd, it is so tempestuous here, fetch us home!

And the Shepherd smiles and fronts the storm and says, "The storm is good. Take shelter in the storm." And I think I may not be speaking at random when I say a good many of you have been out in the tempests; and you have been troubled by them. The tempest of calamity took your fortune and cut it off as with a sword; and you have bare subsistence now. Never mind. Some of you have had children, but are childless now. Some of you have troubles which you cannot name. Never mind. You had them, didn't you? Yes. You were not put here to be shielded from them. No, you were not meant to hide from the storm, but to abide the storm. Out of the storm cometh peace.

Then the Shepherd goes out with His flock and stays with them. It is never hard to be anywhere when the Shepherd is along. You read of the

woman shut in some high floors and the fire shut her away from the staircase with the flame; and, the baby on her arm and love in her heart, she came down the fire-escape, mother and baby. I wish I knew the woman. It would be good to look in her face. When women do these great, sweet woman things that make God surprised I always like to see their faces, because it is like looking at a page of God's Book. When love doesn't know enough to stop, when love doesn't know its sacrifice, isn't that beautiful? Around the baby the arm and down the long, dreary, perilous descent! Brothers and sisters, what I wondered at was whether the baby was asleep or whether the baby knew or whether the baby cared? Had not the babe the mother, and the arm, and the heart? Safety! What was the odds where they were, if the mother was there? And where the mother was there was great safety, and if the Shepherd is around, what odds? What odds? *The trouble with us is that some of us have gone out where the danger is appalling and we are shepherdless.* But out in the appalling danger with the Shepherd it makes no difference about the danger.

Sometimes I have been in my boat on boiling waters; and the fury of the storm was pitiless, tempestuous; and between myself and a watery grave was only a film of a cypress-wood board—that only. But that meant safety. And when the storm played with me I had fun. And when the

waves thrust out their tongues, then I had fun. And when the tumbled waters jumbled their reaching waves together, then I had fun. Because the boat was my safety. Ah, people, does it make much difference, therefore, how bitter the day if you have the Shepherd? I declare—I read the story partially out of my own heart and partially out of yours—that it is not any real difference about the weather; and the only real difference is about the Shepherd. The Shepherd! Did the lamb care that night how black the night was when the Shepherd had it on his heart? Oh, no. Did the lamb care how steep the climb was when the Shepherd climbed the long activity? It did not. Did the lamb care how long the journey was? It did not. It slept upon the Shepherd's heart. And I take it that is what folks want—the Shepherd. How long will it be through the wearying journey? I don't know. How long will it be till we have rest? I do not know. But I will promise you one thing as a minister of God, who has provoked an answer from the lips of Christ, and who has seen the baffled fury of many and many a storm—when Christ is there the conclusion will be peace. About us—the Shepherd. That is enough.

And the Shepherd leads the sheep out to where they totally rely on Him. You thought the world was settled down, did you? And wouldn't act up any more, didn't you? You thought the world



had quit its peevish childhood and its frolics. You thought it, didn't you? And then the world just did a thing to show you. Yes, it did. The earthquake came. Brothers and sisters, the Good Shepherd owns the pastures green, owns the south wind's breath, owns the north wind's breath, owns the smiling fields, owns the sky. All is in His hands. We cannot live without Him. He is our benefactor. And that is what I think is a high crime and misdemeanor of a great many of us—we think that because we work for our board that we *make* the board. We say: "I provide for myself." "I insured myself." "I have provided a competency for my family." "I have built a house." "I have constructed a business." "I have got on pretty well. It is so many years since I came to this town, and now I am pleasantly situated." "I——" But hadn't you the Shepherd? What was He doing? Didn't He lend you strength? Didn't He give you a chance?

Didn't He give you two hands with two hands' might? Didn't He give you endurance? Didn't He give you aspiration and a touch of genius? Didn't He give you forbearance? Why, if God had snuffed out the sun you couldn't have been an artist. Why, if God had struck down the mountains you couldn't have been an engineer. Why, you couldn't do anything without Him.

And then when the day is over the Shepherd leads the sheep back home. I am a man who lives

out where people live, thank God. I am not a shut-in. I am not a hothouse flower. I belong out where everybody is—good folks and bad folks, church members and non-church members, smart and unsmart, and I like them all. I don't know which I like better, the smart or the unsmart. The people who are smart make you weary sometimes, and the people who are unsmart don't. I like them all. Out where people are prosperous and have lots of money, and out where people are not prosperous and haven't any money, and both are good. It is nice to be poor; and I suppose it is nice to be rich. But I am out where both are. And that is what seems to be bountifully good—when it gets toward night and the Shepherd leads his flock toward home. Home, after the day's work. Men going home; women going home; children going home. And if you will speak of death, the difference between a man dying without Christ and with Christ is this, that the man without Christ is going he knows not where, but he is not going home. He is going out towards a land of strangers; and every whither he walks is all going strange. But the man who has Christ—well, at eventide the Shepherd leads him home. And some of these days, you and I will journey out—whither going? And He will say, "Home!" Whose face is at the door? Father's. Home! And the Father at the door of Heaven is smiling and beckoning and calling, "Hurry Home."

Whose face is at the door? Mother's, saying, "Come, hurry for the kiss that awaits you." Home! Whose face at the door? The Shepherd's.

And there is the firelight, and there is the homelight, and there is rest, and there is help, and there is eternal calm. Getting home! And I think I need not adventure this—that there is nothing so sweet in all the poems of Grecian mythology as that. Christ's folks dying are only Christ's folks taking a short cut to get home. Getting home! And the Shepherd's face. God is the Shepherd. Home! And every bleating lamb and every sheep within the pasture bleating, and the Shepherd is calling: "Evening, and home; evening, and home." And they are following, all the sheep. Evening, and home; and the fold and the Shepherd, and one fold and one Shepherd; and the doors are shut and the stars are lit and the night is come and we are come home.

I went at early day to bid a man good-bye on his journey to the Infinite. I had known him in other days—in another city. He lay on his bed very still. I didn't go to deliver a panegyric of farewell. I only went to say, as I wiped the tears from his daughter's face with my hand, and the tears of his wife's face fell on the back of my hand as I held her hand in consolation, "He is on his journey—on his journey home." Oh, heart, this is A Lord's Day Pastoral, "The Lord is my Shepherd; I *cannot* want, I shall not want—forever."

## X

### DELIGHTFUL SINNERS

WILLIAM B. RILEY, D. D.

*"And a certain ruler asked him saying, Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life. . . . Jesus said unto him, Yet lackest thou one thing."*—LUKE 18:18, 22.

**T**HERE are a number of ways in which sermons may be suggested. Undoubtedly the best way is from the study of the Word of God. And yet, a close second to that is observation upon human life; while a third fruitful source is the study of current literature.

In the theme of this sermon these three combine. The Word of God recognizes the fact that some people who never have bowed the knee to Jehovah, nor acknowledged the leadership of Jesus, His Son; nor sought the guidance of His Holy Spirit, are yet wonderfully attractive and companionable; and have many admirable qualities.

Observation attests this as true; you meet them in the street, you mingle with them in the social evening, you transact business with them at the shop, in the office, over the counter. One reason that church people have been attracted by the world is that many of the world's people are revealing traits that are attractive. Sin, in the ab-

tract, is a horrible thing; it scars, it sorrows, it distresses; but some sinners are wonderfully winsome, and while you may regret the godlessness of their lives, you are compelled to admit the certain graces of the same.

Let me define more closely the meaning of my subject. God forbid that I should intimate that all sinners are delightful or that all saints are disagreeable. Such would be an egregious falsehood; nor do I desire to hint that the majority of sinners are delightful, and the majority of saints disagreeable, for that contention could not be supported. But when I declare that some sinners are very delightful, and some professional saints are very disagreeable, I state something about which there is a consensus of opinion.

The man of my text was an agreeable sinner, and the traits of his character will make any man or woman to be admired, and the company of such to be sought.

There are four features that stand out distinctly in the study of this episode—the culture of this man's mind; the courtliness of his manners; the character of his morals; and the Christlessness of his emotions.

### *The Culture of His Mind*

“And a certain ruler sought him, saying.” If one would know something of the education of a ruler of that hour, he would do well to study the

Apostle Paul, who was himself a member of the Sanhedrin, consequently a ruler among the Jews.

He had sat at the feet of Gamaliel, one of the greatest teachers of the times, and in all Greek and Hebrew learning he was an expert. Unquestionably a large degree of mental culture was required of every man who held a like station. If you listen to some loose thinkers of our own day you would imagine that the intellect has only lately been unbound, or reached that degree of unfolding which lifts it above the fine phrase "the infancy of the race." But all such expressions are only evidences of the awful straits to which the advocates of the evolutionary theory have been brought in their attempts to sustain the same. The world's greatest intellectual lights are not modern ones! Gladstone was not the equal of Moses, Spurgeon was not the superior of Paul, and President Eliot would never have put Gamaliel to shame, and it is doubtful if any modern more perfectly combines the accomplished politician and the accomplished scholar than did Joseph of Arimathæa.

One of the sanest lectures delivered in Minneapolis in a long time was given by President Jordan on "The Making of a Darwin," and there was more truth than poetry in his contention that the time used to be when the minds of the students were quickened to investigation by acquisition;

and the time is when they are lumbered by machine-made information.

It would seem that he does not stand alone in this contention, for the late Woodrow Wilson once expressed himself after a kindred manner, saying, "The children of the last two or three decades have not been educated." "I have been teaching," he adds, "for twenty years. That is, I have been conducting class-room exercises! But I do not think that I have been teaching any appreciable part of this time. I have been delivering lectures, sometimes about things of which I knew, but more often about things of which I had heard. The results have been that my pupils have remembered my stories and forgotten my lectures. You must remember that information is not education. The greater part of the work that we are doing in our schools to-day is to impart information. My father was a man who used very precise English, and he once said, 'Man is not a prolix gut to be stuffed.' One of the principal objects of education should be enlightenment, or the unloading from the minds of the pupils of the misinformation that they have received. It is not cramming them with irrelevant facts. It is better to see one thing than to look at one hundred." Society is accustomed to delight in the well-informed man; and in truth, he is delightful. How good to spend an evening with him, to tap him as he would a cider barrel and drink to our heart's content.

But after all, the truest culture is not so much a matter of information as it is of mental strengthening. To be of monarch mind is to be admired indeed—and the world has many such. I have always believed, and now contend, that the keenest intellects are Christian. Mr. Gladstone, you remember, said that of his cabinets of fifty-five men—England's brainiest—over fifty of them believed in God as the Jehovah of Heaven, and in the Bible as the Word of God. And yet we cannot forget that Beaconsfield, his contemporary and competitor, was a Christless man, but a very attractive one. As one moves through the world and meets a cultured mind he cannot withhold admiration—and he ought not. The unsaved student who so perfectly appreciates an education that he makes sacrifices to achieve it, and by his struggles stands above every fellow in the class, will command admiration there; and if he live on the same level he will make his friends so long as he shall live. After the last thing has been said in favour of godliness—and who can say it—it remains a fact that we prefer the company of the godless brilliant to the sinless numbskull.

I know not a few men who hang to the little end of a cigar half the time, from whose lips an oath will occasionally slip, the secret of whose lives it would be dangerous to disclose, and yet whose intellectual supremacy is such that for the life of me I cannot keep from loving them. When an op-



portunity is offered I am tempted to court their society. But this young man revealed a second trait which is even more winsome than mental acumen, namely

### *The Courtliness of His Manners*

The New Testament writers are graphic. When, with their pens, they paint a picture, it is not a dull, stolid thing; it is a moving picture; there is action and life in it. One report presents this man as "running" after Jesus, and as "falling" before Him, and even in this report we have the terms employed, "Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" His animation, reverential attitude and address, choice, complimentary term "Good Teacher" all tell the story of beautiful breeding.

Young women have what are called "finishing schools" by which it is pretty generally understood that the principal thing to be accomplished there is a beautiful manner; and in fact, when once that has become a prevailing atmosphere of one's life it will well-nigh cover all deficiencies. The aristocracy of education is both sensitive and more bigoted than is the aristocracy of wealth. A mistake in grammar does not exactly offend them; but it jars, and renders uncomfortable and can scarcely be forgiven; and yet that is well-nigh overlooked if associated with a gracious manner.

We are told that the Duke of Marlborough wrote

English badly and spelled it worse, but the charm of his manner was so irresistible that he influenced all Europe and swayed the destinies of empires. His fascinating smile and winning speech disarmed the fiercest hatred and made friends of the bitterest enemies. Then we have Lord Peterborough, who once spoke of Bishop Felelon as "a delicious man." In spite of Aaron Burr's immorality, in fact his utter godlessness, his manner was so charming that men who knew his guilt were half ready to defend him, and women who looked upon his face refused to believe the stories against him, and a multitude of them became victims of his magical deportment. Lord Chesterfield once said, "A man's own good breeding is the best security against other people's ill manners. It carries along with it a dignity that is respected by the most petulant," and Chesterfield illustrated his own words. We are told that Madame Recamière was so charming that when she passed the contribution box in the Church of St. Roche, Paris, twenty thousand francs were put into it.

There is a quaint old legend to the effect that the monk Basle died while under the ban of excommunication by the Pope, and was sent in charge of an angel to find his proper place in the nether world. But his genial disposition won him friends wherever he went. The fallen angels adopted his manner; and even the good angels went a long way to see him and live with him.

He was removed to the lowest depths of hell to save them from his influence, but his inborn politeness and kindness were so irresistible that he changed hell into heaven. At length the angel returned with the monk, saying that no place could be found to punish him, his sentence was revoked and he was sent to Heaven and canonized as a saint. Someone speaking of Jonah said, "You cannot keep a good man down." One thing is certain, you cannot cover away a man of cultured manners; the crowd will seek him out and follow him; and even if there are spots in his life they will love him still.

As an illustration of what a gentleman would do, take the story told of the lady who entered a train and took her seat, to see just ahead of her a man with a lighted cigar. She coughed and moved uneasily, but the hint did not have any effect, so she tartly said, "I suppose you are a foreigner, and do not know that there is a smoking car attached to the train and that smoking is not permitted here." The man made no reply; he did not even embarrass her by looking at her, but quietly threw his cigar out the window. When the conductor entered she learned to her astonishment that she was in the private car of General Grant, and with profuse apologies, she fled. Grant never was a saint, but he did know how to be a gentleman; a thing like that goes a long way toward making one the people's idol. I can see the face

of this young ruler though he is two thousand years removed from us. It is clean; I can hear his voice, it is musical; I can interpret his manner, it is courteous; he is a delightful sinner.

### *He Was Exemplary in Morals*

When Jesus reminded him of the commandments, he said, "All these have I observed from my youth." Few men could truthfully say it. The most of us would have to confess rather, in the Episcopalian form, "Lord, we have done the things we ought not to have done; and left undone the things we ought to have done." The most of us would have to admit with the Apostle Paul that not only in outward conduct have we been transgressing God's laws, and even the laws of man, but that in our inner disposition we were also wrong, "Carnal, sold under sin, for that which we do we know not; not what we would do we practice, but what we hate, that we do." For while "to will is present with us, to do that which is good, is not." There seems to be even a law that to those of us who would do good, evil is present, and what we would not, that we practice, under the law of sin which is in our members, until we are compelled to cry, "Wretched men that we are, who shall deliver us out of the body of this death?"

The world knows a good deal of boasted morality; it does not know so much of experimental

morality. And yet the world sets upon morality, a high estimate, for genuine morality makes up a man's character, and, as Sam Jones says, "Character is the immortal part of man. Character is that part of you and me which shall outlive the stars. Character is very different from reputation. My reputation is what men say of me; my character is what I really am."

And then he illustrates: "The finest picture of character and reputation I ever saw was at the shipyard at Portsmouth, Virginia. In company with some friends we visited the shipyards there just about the time the *Texas* was ready to launch, and, walking around the great ship, I asked the master builder how thick the hull of the ship was? 'It is two layers of steel about the thickness of your hand,' he said. I asked him if those modern guns would throw a ball through her wall? 'Yes,' he replied, 'as easily as a rifle will shoot a lead ball through a white pine plank.' 'What,' I said, 'and this battleship to cost nearly three million dollars, and you are to launch her out to be punctured and sunk by the first well-directed shot aimed at her?' 'No,' said he, 'you don't understand this ship. Let's go on her upper deck. Come with me.'

"When we reached her upper deck, I looked at her massive turrets, I said, 'My, what are those?' He said, 'Those are her turrets.' I said, 'What about them?' He replied, 'The walls of

her turrets are twelve inches thick, made of the best armor plate. There is not a flat place on her turrets as large as the palm of your hand. A ball fired at her turrets would not stick, and if it did it would do no harm.' Then I said, 'Why have her so strong up here and so weak below?' He said, 'Mr. Jones, you do not understand this ship. When she approaches battle they pump water into her hull and sink her on a dead level with her turrets. Then you may turn the guns of all battle-ships and forts on her and you can't phase her.' 'Well,' said I, 'what sort of guns will she carry?' He replied, 'No ship or fort can stand up before her guns.' My reputation may be riddled by the tongues and pens of others, but if I am a man of good character I sink myself on a level with my character, and then you can turn the guns of earth and hell loose upon me and you can't phase me. But when I turn the guns loose from the turrets of my character nothing can stand before them." And morality can do that and Christian morality always does.

There is another morality, however, which passes current in the world and which is supposed by some to be just as good as any man needs, but has more to do with reputation than it has with character. A man who does not steal is regarded as being moral at that point, although he may be coveting every minute the possessions of his neighbour, and thereby in heart violating the law of

God. The man who does not murder is regarded as a moral man, although down in his heart he so hates his fellow that in the sight of God he is a murderer. A man who does not lie outright and is not caught in it is regarded as a moral man, and yet he may so twist the truth at times as to paralyze it; but he has not been so vulgar in the process as to make possible his conviction in court; a man who does not violate the seventh commandment may be regarded moral, and yet he may look the look of lust, which Jesus declared equally guilty in the sight of God. Such morality, as Henry Ward Beecher once said, "May restrain the output of evil, but it does not attempt to purify and to cure the sources of evil.

"It refuses permission to murder; but it does not forbid a man to feel murderously. It forbids a man to swear overtly; but it does not forbid that black cloud of tempestuous feeling out of which oaths come as lightning flashes. It forbids a man to rob; but it does not forbid a man to wish he had his neighbour's property. It forbids a man to break out into lustful impurities; but it does not restrain a lustful eye or desire. It does not touch the seat of evil. It deals with the externalities of a man, and not with the whole of his interior nature."

And yet even such morality has its value. And the exercise of it reveals some beauty. One reason why certain sinners are yet delightful is that they

exercise self-restraint, and the evil spirit within them is not given rein to run at pleasure and trample at will and bear down righteousness and set up iniquity. God forbid that I should say a word in depreciation of the act of the man who though he feels murder in his heart yet withholds his hand; and the act of the man who though he lusts for liquor, avoids the saloon; and the act of the girl who though she yearns after the dance hall and the wine cup, yet on the purely selfish basis says, "These things will destroy me," and betakes herself to the companionship of a better sort, or finds refuge in her home. Unquestionably the law of Moses has created a social code in the world which men who know not Moses, practice; and women who never named the name of Jesus adopt, in sheer self-preservation. They know that a good reputation is the best stock-in-trade; and that "honesty is the best policy," and both a social and commercial necessity; and that to offend society is to feel its resentment, and to suffer its ostracism; and while the motive is very unchristian, the social product is very desirable; we like the individual who keeps up the practice of morality.

I confess to you that when I go into a home and find a lad growing there who is instantly and willingly obedient to his parents, whose speech is chaste, whose conduct is clean, whose deportment is manly; or a young woman living there, whose father is her first counsellor, whose mother is her



best sweetheart, and whose behaviour endears her to every member of the house, even though they tell me that the first has never confessed Christ, and the second is a bit skeptical concerning the verities of the Scripture, I cannot withhold my admiration. And, then, if that morality takes on the expression of generosity and the attitude of kindness, and the language of sympathy and love, it sweeps every obstacle, and holds admirers spell-bound. Newell Dwight Hillis says: "In his reminiscences of the Civil War, Walt Whitman tells us how a kind word turned a rebel into a patriot, and transformed a soldier. After one of the great battles, when the columns had swept by, leaving behind the deserted cannon, with horses and men wounded and dying, the nurse came in with her gentle ministry to friends and enemies alike. Like angels of mercy these nurses staunched the prisoner's wounds, fed him with cordials and jellies, and slowly nursed him out of the grave. One Southerner of iron will the good, gray poet met who for many days seemed hard as a rock, but whose hatred, kindness at last melted away as the sun a thin armour of ice.

"To break the monotony and cheer the sick man's solitude, Walt Whitman planned a diversion. One day, lying upon his cot, the pale, sick soldier heard the bugle sound, and looking through his open window he saw a troop of soldiers marching by carrying an old and tattered flag. In that

hour kind words softened the soldier's heart. Old memories returned to the man, hot tears ran down his white cheeks, and lifting himself up, the shouts without were answered by the feeble, broken shouts within. Oh, beautiful event! Telling us that if bombs and bullets could only harden the enemy, kind words turned away his wrath, and turned a rebel into a patriot." And yet to this beautiful young man Jesus was compelled to say, "One thing thou lackest." What was it? Not that he had "not given everything to the poor," as the after Scriptures tell us. The thing that he "lacked" was that he was outside the kingdom of God's grace!

### *He was Without Mercy*

In the first place he never had felt his need of it. He had been trusting his own good deeds to save him; and now when it looked a little questionable, he wanted to know what further ones he could perform to make the inheritance of eternal life certain. Never in His lifetime did Jesus, with so ruthless a hand, sweep away the hopes of the moralist as when He dealt with this man, this delightful sinner. He declared that it would be easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for him to get into the Kingdom of God. Simply for the old reason, and yet the ever new one, that "by the deeds of the law no flesh can be justified." Simply, we are not "saved by

works of righteousness which we have done"; simply because the man who counts himself a moralist yet remains a sinner; and whatever his outward conduct his inner nature is wrong; however perfectly he may attempt to practice the ten commandments, the heart is yet lusting to violate the law. Though keeping up a good reputation, and maintaining a fair outward appearance, as one has put it, "He is clasping himself in his own arms," and making his good name a kind of veil, when down beneath he may be like this poor fellow—stingy, self-clasped, self-centered, self-content. Certainly he is respectable; moreover he belongs to a good family; he enters the best society; he may even be in the church; and if he should die to-morrow everybody would tell first-class lies about him, for as Henry Ward Beecher says, "A funeral is the only place where wholesale lying is permitted."

And yet a man who has been self-centered does in truth violate the very temper and spirit of the Gospel of Christ, even while he is practising a certain form of morality. The difference is illustrated in the Scriptures. When Judah was tempted by his daughter-in-law he yielded, thinking he had covered his conduct and kept his reputation as a moral man; when a kindred temptation came to Joseph he said, "How can I do this thing and sin against God?" The first worshipped himself, the second loved his Maker and did not want

to offend Him, and these two are as far apart as are reputation and character; as far apart as the real and the spurious; yes, these two are as far apart as are Heaven and hell. That is why Charles Spurgeon could say, "The best promoter of morality is the Gospel. When a man is saved he becomes moral, and more; he becomes holy. But to aim first at morality is altogether to miss the mark; and if we did attain it—as we shall not—yet we should not have attained that for which we were sent into the world."

Dr. Chalmers' experience is a valuable one to those who think that the first Christian ministry ought to preach up morality, for he says that in his first parish he preached morality, and saw no good whatever arising out of his exhortations. But as soon as he began to preach Christ crucified, then there was a buzz, and a stir, and much opposition, but grace prevailed. He who wishes for perfume must grow flowers; he who desires to promote morality must have men saved. He who wants motion in a corpse should first seek life for it, and he who desires to see a rightly ordered life should first desire an inward renewal by the Holy Spirit. We are not too satisfied when we have taught men their duties towards their neighbours, or even their duties towards God; this would suffice for Moses, but not for Christ. The law came by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

We teach men what they ought to be, but we do far more; by the power of the Gospel, applied by the Holy Ghost, we make them what they ought to be by the power of God's Spirit. We put not before the blind the things that they ought to see, but we open their eyes in the Name of Jesus. We tell not the captive how free he ought to be, but we open the door and take away his fetters. We are not content to tell men what they must be, but we show them how this character can be obtained, and how Jesus Christ freely presents all that is essential to eternal life, to all those who come and put their trust in Him.

## XI

### THE REALISM AND IDEALISM OF LIFE

FREDERICK F. SHANNON, D. D.

*"And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"*  
—MATTHEW 27: 46.

*"But go to my brethren and say unto them, I ascend to my Father and your Father: and to my God and your God."*—JOHN 20: 17.

MY subject is the realism and idealism of life, as interpreted by the words and experience of the Lord Christ. Our first text is shot through with such solemnity that one hesitates to pronounce it. It appears originally in the twenty-second Psalm, which contains, according to Tertullian, "the whole passion of Christ." Yet, uttered by our Lord in His dying hour, the words are invested with a hush of wonder and majesty which cause sensitive souls to repeat them with becoming reluctance. They seem to voice what we may venture to call the realism of life. The second text are the words of the Master to Mary Magdalene in the Garden on the first Easter morning. By the way of contrast, and in the light of Christ's triumph over sin, death, and

the grave, they define, in large and glorious fashion, the idealism of life. At any rate, setting the two passages with their unfathomable experiences together, we have what I like to call: The story of the God-man against the universe, and of His final vindication by the universe which apparently forsook Him.

Consider in the first place the realism of life. "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Here is realism indeed—realism drenched with the darkest rain that ever fell from life's midnight skies. More terrible than philosophic pessimism, more awful than scientific agnosticism, more oppressive than all sceptical speculations whatsoever, this experience of the profoundest Soul ever housed in flesh bids one pause and ponder. I can endure Omar's cynicism and Nietzsche's ravings and Schopenhauer's despair. Each saw only a fragment of life and misinterpreted even that. But what shall we say in the presence of the sanest, deepest, wisest, and best, when He, too, seemingly finds a universe bereft of its God? This, surely, is enough to make one shudder. This, I say, is the climax of despair, but it is not all there is.

Other factors are present also. Before the climax can be fully appreciated these must be adequately weighed. Jesus was forsaken by His friends. Let us confess that the way Jesus wooed and won those fishermen and artisans is one of the supreme romances of the soul. He found them

dull, unresponsive, disregarded by the social circles of the period. But behold Him working them over! No sculptor ever gave such attention to his marble; no painter ever dreamed of his canvas; no poet ever brooded over his songs; no architect ever studied his designs; no gardener ever caressed his flowers; no young mother ever leaned over the face of her sleeping babe—none ever gave his being to matter or mind as Jesus gave Himself to those first disciples. Little by little did they realize and own His irresistible spell. As the buried root finally signals to the sun with banners of beauty, so, at last, did James and John and Peter and the others come forth from their dungeons of flesh and view the mountains of divine grandeur towering above them in the Christ of God.

And Peter! Why did not Peter—the imperfect and the impetuous—feel the quickening tides of heroism run so deep and strong in his soul that, when the Master suggested they would all be offended in Him—did not Peter declare: “Even if I must die with Thee, yet will I not deny Thee?” Oh, Peter, what a human brother you are—bone of our bone, flesh of our flesh! A few hours later when Peter, James, and John are told off by the Master to be nearest Him in His agony, they are one and all overcome, not by death, but by sleep. Moreover, when the mob, guided by Judas, comes to take the Master in the garden, we



read: "Then all the disciples forsook him and fled." Jesus was forsaken by His friends; even the inner circle melted away before the raging fires of iniquity that swept the olive orchard through.

Jesus was forsaken, too, by Religion. "Now the chief priests and the whole council sought false witnesses against Jesus, that they might put him to death." Talk about realism! If you care to see realism in its blackest expression, realism uttering itself in unspeakable diabolism, I commend to you that ex-chief priest, Annas, and his crafty son-in-law, Caiaphas, the reigning high priest. For ours is a world in which not only development is at work, but degeneration also. The Jewish religion, in its purer, fairer forms, had fallen from the heights and been picked up by the defiled hands of Annas, Caiaphas, and their unholy conspirators. Surely, this is one of the horrible facts of history: sometimes the holiest is seized upon by the most hellish, which keeps a temporary upper hand. Then do men look up and behold heavens of iron: look out and behold horizons of gloom; look down and behold soundless seas of sorrow. As a flashlight turned upon those two spots of humanized darkness, Annas and Caiaphas, consider the law governing witnesses in the Sanhedrin. In the first place the witness for the defense was first examined; in the second place a corroborating witness was required before the testimony of the first witness became legal. Es-

entially, it was a wise law; its aim was to guarantee justice to all appearing before that august tribunal. But what have we in the case of Jesus? This: "Now the chief priests and the whole council sought false witnesses against Jesus, that they might put him to death." Even religion—the holiest, cleanest, deepest power God implants in the human soul—forsook Jesus, and took refuge in hearts of hatred and minds of malice.

We sometimes compare the last hours of Socrates with those of Christ. The immortal Greek surely behaved himself with heroism and nobility. The grandeur of Socrates reveals, in contrast, the meanness of his judges. But the difference in the trial of Socrates and the trial of Christ is this: It is just the immeasurable difference between the philosopher and the Saviour. If you fail to see it, no argument of mine will convince you. It is not a matter that can be decided by argument. Ultimately it is the reaction of our own souls to that which is secondary and that which is supreme. When a man says that Socrates and Christ belong in the same category, he is properly judging neither, but pronouncing judgment upon himself. And self-judgment, next to the judgment of the wise, good God, is the most searching judgment the moral universe can show. Forsaken by the religion of his own nation, I can easily imagine Socrates, in a universe like this, carrying his case to the supreme court of the Christ. Likewise for-

saken by the religion of His own nation, by no stretch of the imagination could I picture Jesus, in a universe such as ours, carrying His wrongs to a tribunal occupied by Socrates.

"For neither doth the Father judge any man," says Jesus, "but he hath given all judgment unto the Son; that all may honour the Son even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father that sent him." Imagine Socrates speaking these words! He would have brought upon himself centuries of philosophic laughter. But Jesus speaks them, and the Soul of the Universe, as well as Christianized human consciousness, utters its grand "Amen!" Verily, religion was horribly unjust to itself when it forsook Jesus that night two thousand years ago.

Jesus was forsaken by law. "And the same day Pilate and Herod were made friends together; for before they were at enmity between themselves." Did evil ever lift its sinister face and wear a more wicked smile than upon the day when Pilate and Herod, separated by fires of hatred, are drawn together in their mutual antagonism to Christ? Yet, strange as it is, it is by no means uncommon in life. Let two bad men, avowed enemies, be confronted by a good man, and the two bad men, by a kind of a moral gravitation, will be pulled toward each other rather than toward the man in whom goodness lives.

So Pilate and Herod, the right and left arms

of what we call law and order, found in Jesus, the incarnation of justice and truth, a common ground upon which they might stand and reunite the broken ties of a wicked friendship. For one brief moment Pilate, alone with Jesus—"always with that high look of Godlike calm"—and wrought upon by His nameless power, seems to see a tiny flame of goodness flaring up amid the burned-out cinders of his ruined soul. Guided by that feeble, flickering light, he came out and said to the Jews: "I find no fault in him." And yet Pilate scourged Him, allowed his soldiers to crown Him with thorns, mock Him, and smite Him. Likewise, Herod and his soldiers mocked Him, dressed Him in gorgeous robes of derision, and shunted Him about as if He were a common criminal. Yet, forsaken by friendship and religion and law, does not Jesus reach the acme of forsakenness as revealed in His question on the Cross: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" In a swiftly darkening world-order He seems to be finally enclosed by impenetrable darkness.

Has the God whose will it was His delight always to do—has He, too, forsaken Him? Has the Father whose deeds of mercy He had joyfully performed—has He given His Son to the unmerciful? It is one of the darkest, most mysterious moments in the whole history of mind. Perhaps, after all, it is not unthinkable that the disciples should forsake Him. The spirit is willing, but the

flesh is weak. It is horrible, but not impossible, for religion to become so perverted as to lose its inherent majesty. And law, in the course of this world, often loses its way, falling among the enemies of order and justice and truth. But here, at last, is the question that crushed the Son of man: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

Now, what I want to know is this: Will God answer the question? Verily, He will! He is the only person who can answer it. And His answer must be written in deeds so wonderful that all history, all thought, all art, all music, all eloquence, all faith, all hope, all love shall spend their being in trying to tell how God answers the question of His beloved Son upon the Cross. Meantime, we shall have to journey from the Cross to the Garden; we shall have to go in behind the stifling realism of life and behold life's imperishable idealism.

Consider, therefore, the idealism of life as it utters itself in our second text: "Go unto my brethren and say to them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and my God and your God." These are the words of the Master to Mary as she stood weeping and worshipful at the entrance of the empty tomb. And what words of life are these, deep with deathless beauty, alive with the wonder and wisdom of Godhood! "Oh, woman, with the lily heart and the Easter hope, go tell

my brethren that I ascend. I have descended into the uttermost depths. I have found desolate wastes where friends forsake and religion denies and law perverts. But I have endured them all; I have wrung from death the last bitter drop within its poisoned being; I have gone with the outgoing tides to the uttermost depths of doom. But now the tides have turned. Deep and swift and strong they are bearing me back to the eternal hills of home, whence I came here to share the lot of immortal seamen, wrecked upon the coasts of time. Yea, Mary, weep not. Go to my brethren—the brethren who forsook me and fled—go to them and say, My God, who seemed to have forsaken me hath not suffered his holy one to see corruption, but hath raised me from the dead and led captivity captive.” Oh, yes, there is plenty of realism in life. But there is *more*—there is deathless and undefeatable idealism.

Do you say that His friends forsook Jesus? Well, but consider this: Those disciples at that particular period of their development did not spell out the full significance of friendship. Look at them later, after they had journeyed to the world's end under the budding skies of that friendship divine! You will find nothing grander in history than the way those first men and women responded to the pull of Christ from within the worlds out of sight. We bow our heads in shame at the denying, swearing Peter, remembering that

we, too, have presented just as abject spectacles of failure. But oh! do not forget that other Peter—the Peter of the unpublished Easter morning talk with His Lord; the Peter of Pentecost; the Peter of the Cross, crucified head downward; the Peter of the Christian centuries who, just because of his mixture of weakness and strength, has brought hope to the struggling millions in their fight to win their souls for God and truth.

See, also, that young Pharisee, persecuting to the death those who had found the way. Behold him red-handed, ranging like a wild beast his ways of destruction. Employ any figure of speech to set forth the desperation of Saul of Tarsus, and you will hardly equal the persecutor himself. But lo! that bloodthirsty Saul becomes the life-giving, kingdom-building Paul! As an exhibition of sheer will power, measured by what he did in influencing cities, continents, and civilizations, I can think of no being in the known universe capable of mastering Saul of Tarsus except the Christ of God.

But He did it—did it grandly, did it in such wise that the splendour of that noonday sun pales before the transfiguring light with which the glorified Christ enveloped the Apostle to the Gentiles. We do wrong in thinking only of our imperfect and ungrown friendships. Friendship that could be entirely exploited in the fields of time would not wear well in spheres of eternity. After all,

we are scarcely beyond the embryonic stage in these high matters. October days spread a magic across the land. It steals not alone into the dreamful faces of humans, but it seems to stir our little friends, the caterpillars, to unwonted activity. They are in the grass, in the roadways, even upon the doorsteps. One morning I met one of these prophet-creatures coming south. Pausing, I said: "Good morning, Mr. Caterpillar. Whither bound?" He was so absorbed in the business of creeping that he scarcely deigned to answer me. But as he kept creeping, creeping, creeping, he looked back and said: "Why, man, I'm on my way to get my wings. Don't bother me." I laughed and at once took my seat among the scornful. "Your wings?" I rejoined. "What on earth have you to do with wings?" "What have I to do with wings?" he answered, creeping, creeping along. "Why, I have wings inside of me this very moment. I'm going to unpack them one of these days. Come around next June and I will show you my wings instead of this worm."

And are we not all embryonic humans? We spend our years in the valley between dust and divinity. Two natures are ever struggling within us. "The man of prehistoric times lives on, unchanged, in our unconscious," says Freud. But never mind! The mountain of divinity shall absorb the mountain of dust, the two struggling na-



tures within shall be finally harmonized, the man of prehistoric times shall be changed into the man of times eternal. For God will perfect that which concerneth us. And more than earth concerns us, more than death and the grave. Smitten with a sick man's fancy, Coleridge wrote Charles Lamb, asking forgiveness for some fancied wrong. Lamb replied in the following postscript, which deserves to be immortal: "If you ever thought an offense, much more wrote it, against me, it must have been in the time of Noah, and the great waters have swept it away. Mary is crying for mere love of your letter." Well, if human friendship can dress itself in such lovely hues, think it not strange that the divine friendship shall go on working its miracles of grace—now setting the wayward feet of a Peter upon solid rock, now turning the discordant will of a Saul into the undying love of the Paul of Corinthians thirteen. Thirteen may be an unlucky number, but one of the transcendent chapters in all literature bears the number thirteen, and has also thirteen incomparable verses.

Did you say that religion forsook the Master? I beg your pardon! That was just a slip of the tongue, and you must instantly apologize. It was only make-believe and petrified hypocrisy, which had become temporarily housed in the Sanhedrin, that mistreated the Master. Pure religion and undefiled forsake Him? Why, you might as well talk of flowers forsaking their stems, of sunbeams for-

saking the sun. But even in that horrible night of realism, consider how the true asserts itself. Go back to the Cross again. Nature seems to be putting on black, as if to hide her face from the baseness of men. While priests mock and soldiers gamble and mobs sway to and fro, one of those two thieves breaks through walls of hate and ventures into gardens of faith. "Jesus," he cried, as the worlds reeled around and within him, "remember me when Thou comest in Thy kingdom." Ponder this: when His own friends had temporarily fallen away, true religion steps forth from the soul of a criminal, beholds the majesty of our dying Lord, and prays for a place in His undying kingdom. Over against the wickedness of high priest and king and governor, I like to set the faith of the repentant thief. A grain of true faith in Jesus Christ will outweigh mountains of iniquity. Paint your realism "black as the pit, from pole to pole," but remember it is not the whole, it is not even on speaking terms with the permanent and true.

For while sin runs amuck in high places and truth is ignored in low, God will find Him room even in the most unexpected house of human nature and gloriously dwell therein. Think, too, of Mary Magdalene. You say that religion was struck a hard blow by Annas and Caiaphas. I tell you the world-deep devotion of Mary Magdalene is bright enough to illumine their darkness.

Every Gospel tells about Mary. There are some facts connected with the life of lives reported by one evangelist and omitted by others. But Mary, sin-wounded, Christ-forgiven Mary, walks through all the Gospels of the Easter morning like some royally crowned queen come down from the high hills of God. When the love of God in Christ laid hold of Mary it found a human being who could stand by the Cross, weep through the night as her woman's hands prepared the spices of love, beat the sun up in the morning, and run over the hills from Bethany to catch the first human glimpse of the risen one! Has not Mary become a kind of voice for all struggling, aspiring, climbing, falling souls the world around? Thus a modern poet has, through Mary, uttered a truth that all of us should heed:

“O Magdalene, I, too, have known the longing  
 To kneel and wash with tears the Saviour's feet;  
 To dry them with my tresses and anoint them  
 With blessed myrrh and ointment, rare and sweet.

But I have not the courage that God gave you;  
 I could not bear the wise men's piercing eyes.  
 Before a sneering glance my heart would falter;  
 I would deny their scorn with shameful lies.

And still I go to church each Sunday morning  
 And think upon our dear Lord crucified.  
 I yearn to kneel before His feet for comfort  
 And kiss His hands and touch His wounded side.

If I should cry, my burning tears would shame me,  
And those who sit in every near-by row  
Would turn their scornful glances on my sorrow;  
I could not bear to have the whole world know.

And so, I sit a hypocrite, contented,  
To know that only God can see my soul.  
O Magdalene, plead well for me in Heaven,  
That Christ may cleanse my heart and make me  
whole."

But did not Law forsake Him? Did not the rules of civilized society, as reflected by Rome and Jerusalem, break down under the strain of injustice and yield up the Christ to wild, insane forces of disorder? In answer to these questions we should do some straight, hard thinking. In the first place, the sense of law and order did not *originate* with Memphis, Babylon, Athens, Rome, or Jerusalem. The sense of order is primarily in the heart and mind of God. In behind protoplasm, the physical basis of life, law and order are in perfect operation.

They are in the stellar worlds and in the atomic galaxies, in the illimitably great and the infinitely small. Now, is the idea of physical order more deeply ingrained in the warp and woof of things than the idea of moral order? In other words, is the physical anterior to and superior to the spiritual? It is utterly unthinkable! Law and order, let me repeat, did not begin with the world, nor can it end with the world.

In the history of human thought, few men have done more to give this idea worthy expression than Richard Hooker. He, too, belongs to that marvelous sixteenth century. He belongs with your Shakespeare and Bacon and Milton and Spenser and Raleigh. One of the amplest souls that ever lived—great in his learning, great in his piety, great in his humanness—Hooker combines the best of the ancients and the moderns. Dying at the age of forty-seven, when the fundamentalists of his time were misinterpreting the very religion they professed, Hooker asked: "May we cause our faith without Reason to appear reasonable in the eyes of men?" And then, of this original, uncreated law which holds the worlds together, he says, in one of the noblest passages of all literature: "Wherefore, that here we may briefly end: of law there can be no less acknowledged, than that her seat is the bosom of God, her voice the harmony of the world: all things in Heaven and earth do her homage, the very least as feeling her care, and the greatest as not exempted from her power; both angels and men and creatures of what condition soever, though in different sort and manner, yet all with uniform consent, admiring her as the mother of their peace and their joy." More than three hundred years ago, what did the great Hooker say but this: "The idea of law did not begin with this world, and, therefore, it cannot end with this world."

In the second place, how can law ultimately forsake its creator? Those to whom the administration of the organized laws of society is entrusted may prove unequal to their obligations and privileges. But their reign, in the long view, is temporary, brief, soon gone. But He—the Divine Original of law—abides forever, and cannot be forsaken by that which is the breath of His own being and Godhead. Therefore, what an answer does Jesus give to Pilate! Nettled by the Master's speechful silence, Pilate asked: "Knowest thou not that I have power to release thee, and have power to crucify thee?" Calmly and with God-like restraint the Master replied: "Thou couldst have no power against me, except it were given thee from above." In short, Caesar, Pilate, Herod, Annas and Caiaphas, all alike, were even then within the grip of that very power "from above," the law of God, of right, of truth—which they were wickedly perverting and against which they were vainly contending.

Forsaken by the law? Oh, no! Our Lord could not be forsaken by that which owes its being to Him. Men may violate Christ's law and destroy themselves. But that law is indestructible. Indeed, one of the most solemn facts of our era for the whole wide world is this: By ignoring Christ's law for individuals and nations, mankind may pull down the house of civilization itself. We emphasize the beauty of doing that which is right;

we must also emphasize the horror of doing that which is wrong. We say: "What a fine thing it would be if all nations could be so organized as to outlaw war."

Ah, but we must also say: "All nations *must* be so organized, or else war shall utterly destroy the nations." And the genius of such organization must be filled with the Spirit of Christ; otherwise it must fall under its own load of mechanical ineffectiveness. But whatever men and nations do, or refuse to do, set this down as inviolable truth: law cannot forsake the Christ of God any more than light can forsake the sun from which it streams.

"He shall lay on souls the power of Peace,  
And send on kingdoms torn the sense of home,  
More than the fire of joy that burned on Greece,  
More than the light of law that rose on Rome."

Finally: Was He not forsaken of God? Did He not Himself cry from His hill of pain: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Here, indeed, would we stand in awe upon the verge of mysterious realms. The full meaning of these words cannot be disclosed. Beyond the powers of thought did the anguish of our Lord's vicarious passion fling him forth into the dreadful wastes of no man's land of sin and death. Yet are we absolutely sure that in the darkest moment in the experience of the moral universe He was

forsaken of God? The God whose eternal Son He is; the God from whose bosom He came; the God whose wisdom He spake; the God whose works He wrought—surely God was well pleased with such a humanized transcript of His own inexhaustible self-giving in that hour when both the outer and the inner suns seemingly refused their light to the Saviour of the world. Hunting the Universe through and waiting the cycles long, God had at last found One who, in the spheres of humanity, could perfectly experience and interpret His love to a lost world. Forsaken of God? Why, God raised Him from the dead and gave unto Him the Name that is above every name, whether in hell or earth or sky.

So, it seems to me, does our holy religion introduce us to the realism of life. But it does not stop there—it goes straight through the dark and terrible realism into the heart of infinite love wherein our white and conquering realism everlastingly abides. Penetrating below all deeps of darkness, it ranges beyond all heights of light and love. Upon our own hills of agony, we, too, sometimes cry: “Why hast Thou forsaken me?” But hard by the darkening hill is a garden all golden with the light of the Resurrection Morning. Standing by the entrance of life’s empty tombs, we may still hear one say: “Go unto my brethren and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and my God and your God.”



Oh, is it not the history of one Man standing against the universe, only to find the universe swinging at last over to His side, proclaiming Him King of kings and Lord of lords!

“But now Thou art in the shadowless land,  
Behind the light of the setting sun;  
And the worst is forgotten which evil planned,  
And the best which Love's glory could win is  
won.”

## XII

### THE HEART RENEWED

JOHN TIMOTHY STONE, D. D.

*"Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me."*—PSALM 51:10.

**T**HIS text goes to the very center of character, and this prayer of David's is really an evidence of his true and genuine piety. He was a great sinner; he was a great man, and he was a great saint in the truest sense of the word. There are those who do not understand the mystery of the human heart, and none of us know its peculiarities, its vagaries, its weaknesses. We test it constantly and find that we cannot depend upon it, because the very emotions of life in their holiest aspirations are oftentimes closely associated with selfish desire and personal indulgence. No one has been strong enough of himself to control his emotions and desires, save as some great holy purpose or strong personality has controlled them for him.

The scene of our text is a very dramatic one. The prophet had come to this great man and pointed out by analogy and illustration a sin like

to his own, but so earnest was David in his desire to help others, so conscientious in life and so just and sincere in soul that he did not realize that the picture had reference to his own life.

The man of the story had herds and flocks without number, and there was a man who had but one piece of land and one ewe lamb. The man who had much took from the poor man all that he had, and that which was dearest to him. David condemned him as any righteous man would do, and then the prophet turned upon him with dramatic force and said: "Thou art the man!"

What did the great man do? Resent it? He had power to deny it. No! But, he was big enough to see and know his wrong and *confess* it before God. That great soul poured out his soul in the words of the Psalm: "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving kindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions; and my sin is ever before me. Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight; that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Create in me a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me."

A gentleman is not a man who always does ex-

actly the right thing in the right place and in just the right way. A scoundrel may do that in externalism, but a gentleman is a man who has enough of greatness in his soul to confess a wrong when he has committed a wrong, and when he has erred, is manly enough to apologize. There is nothing weaker in this world than an apology which is mere affectation. There is nothing stronger than a true apology of a great soul who knows his own guilt, and who is ready to stand before the world and say so.

The great Joseph Parker of the City Temple, London, in the tremendous earnestness of his soul one Sunday morning before a crowded congregation, in which all London was represented, including members of Parliament, denounced the Turk in such strong language that he seemed to curse him from his pulpit. He took the name of God and he took the name of condemnation as he called down the judgment of God upon the Turk. Probably nine-tenths of those who heard him were so carried away with his eloquence that they, too, felt as he did. But, it was not right; it was not wise, and this great man the next Sunday morning, as he leaned over his pulpit, said: "My dear people, I did wrong last Sunday. I was carried away by the intensity of my feeling. No man can condemn but God, and I have no right to curse my brother. I have asked God's forgiveness and I ask yours." It is said that many of that great congregation, as

they went home that day, poured out their hearts before God and asked His forgiveness for their sins both of omission and of commission.

Mr. Spurgeon one day in a moment of anger, resenting some things which had been repeated to him, uttered unkind words against Dr. Parker. The papers came out suggesting Dr. Parker's righteous reply on the next Sunday, but there was none. Not a word was said. Apparently self-effacement was there. That Sunday Mr. Spurgeon was to take his offering for his great orphanages. His congregation did not begin to represent the wealth of the City Temple. But, Mr. Spurgeon was taken sick on Saturday, and one of his assistants made the appeal for the orphans, those motherless and fatherless children. Just before service some one told Dr. Parker of Mr. Spurgeon's sickness. On Sunday morning he arose in his pulpit, and without a single word to defend himself, said to his congregation: "My dear people, Mr. Spurgeon is sick this morning. He has thousands of pounds to raise for his orphanages. He cannot present his appeal himself. There is not a nobler work in all London than this work; \* I want you to give the offering this morning to him, and I want every one of you to give liberally." The offering was large, but the deed was larger. Mr. Spurgeon said later in his pulpit that Jesus Christ became more real to him and to them

from that day, and all London knew what he meant.

It is so easy to criticize; it is too easy to find fault, but we *should* find fault and criticize in a constructive way. Men whose hearts are great and whose lives are pure; men vitalized by Christ can denounce, not only with effect, but with authority, when wrong doing is upheld in high places, but these men add the truth, and "yet I show you a more excellent way."

We would not plead for an interpretation of the religion of Jesus Christ which is weak or anemic; which does not lift its voice against evil; which does not understand the words of Christ—"I came not to bring peace, but a sword," but we are ready also to say with Him, "I came not to destroy but to fulfill."

We are not turning our thought to the general discussion of righteous defense, but we wish to say that this old world needs more purity of heart. "Create in me a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me." The evil which we think of others; the bitterness which we feel in our own hearts toward others—these really injure our lives, and like a very viper sting with their poison the soul that might be joyful and glad. It is not what others may say of us; it is what we say and think of others, which will determine and embitter. If that man of God in the City Temple that morning had risen to defend himself and denounce his

friend he would have lessened, not increased, his power of influence; but, his true heart so touched the lives of others that he made a better London, a better church and a better human relationship, for people saw Christ in him.

Let us consider carefully the fact that the Scripture says: "The heart is deceitful and desperately wicked." The Scripture also says: "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." This is true no matter what the outward acts may be.

The heart may be a great friend if we are led of God, but it may be the worst of enemies if we allow evil thoughts and evil motives to control. Unkindness, bitterness, jealousy, envy, deceit—all arise there. We teach children about conscience, but conscience goes right back to the sincerity of the heart. Without this genuineness there develops subtle and dangerous indifference and cynicism which have in themselves the root of bitterness.

It is not so much what we do as what we are that counts with God, and what we are goes back to the heart in our desires and our wills.

Some years ago in one of our Western cities an evangelist preached for six successful weeks, and it was afterwards proved to be a part of his plan to gain the confidence of the people that he might rob a bank. But the men who were really converted under him were converted just the same, and have since lived in the strength of that con-

version. God often overrules the wickedness of men, and causes "the wrath of man to praise Him." A man may be right in outward appearance, but his heart may be condemned before God and men. There is nothing that is doing more injury than insincerity.

How will God deal with the hypocrite? The only people He condemned were the hypocrites—men who lived double lives. There is nothing, to-day, which is undermining society more than the man who pretends to be true when he is not true, and there is no justice in a public opinion which condemns the woman that sins and excuses the man and admits him to drawing-rooms and society. There is no double standard with God, and there should be none with man. The time will come when Christian society will treat them alike.

Yes, out of the heart cometh evil. If a man's heart is not right, his deeds will not be right. What did Emerson say: "What you do makes so much noise that I cannot hear what you say." But, he might have gone further and said: "What you are is so vital that what you do does not count." Before God's searchlight of the soul a man must be clean and true. When will we learn that self-respect is worth in value a hundred times more than reputation? Let us look into our own lives, into our own hearts and find out if we are true! Our hearts are responsible for all hypocrisy and wrong.



Let us consider how we may relate our hearts to service. It was said:

“Our heart to resolve,  
Our head to contrive,  
Our hand to execute,”

and this is the relation. If the heart is to resolve, the heart must be right, for the resolve must be on the side of that which is true and right.

Now in the teaching of the child in the realm of conscience one word has to do with the whole determination of character, and that word is “duty.” What is a man’s duty to his own soul? What is a man’s duty to his own home? What is a man’s duty to his city, to his nation? Yes, pre-eminently, what is his duty to God?

The heart not only then defines duty, but gives us that resolve through the will which enables us to carry it out. But, the heart must be trained aright, and we cannot train that heart aright save as we love God. Young said: “If wrong our hearts or heads, our right is vain.” If the heart is not right, the mind cannot speak aright; the life cannot do its work as it should, no matter how good the purpose. If there is the pollution of an evil heart, the life will be corrupt. If the heart is diseased, illness will permeate and extend itself throughout, because germs spread rapidly and multiply beyond all calculation where there is the germ of death in the soul.

There is a great foundation truth for us to face just now as Christian citizens and as Christian men—we must oppose the destruction of our standards. We should never be willing to live in complacency where organized wrong controls the state or the nation. For us to be complacent in such times, without exercising our manhood and spending our time and money for a better day is to allow the sinfulness of the human heart to control the entire life.

In conclusion, let us make this thought a practical one. To use the figure of the physical heart, we know how everything centres there. A specialist will touch your pulse or listen a moment and so accurate and keen is his discernment that in many instances he can tell you relatively the time when your life will go out. I have known a great specialist to call the loved ones aside and in speaking of the ill patient say: "There is no chance for his living more than an hour," and he was right. Yes, the delicacy and the value of the human heart should prompt us to "keep it with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life." What the heart is, the body will be if it is diseased or impaired, no matter how strong the muscles or brain may be.

David the great soul! Somehow we love David more because he was so human. We love Peter the same way. He knew the tests of life and in his weakness he failed, but, oh, the greatness of that

leader of men who could stand before the people, and lead the early church as he did and still plead with God for forgiveness out of his very soul, as he "went out into the night and wept bitterly." And, David, as he cried: "O God, create in me a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me." It was all settled, for God always answers prayers like these.

If our hearts are right, we will think aright; we will feel aright toward others, for God will renew a right spirit within us. Then life will become a Psalm. Longfellow felt this keenly when he penned those immortal words:

"Tell me not in mournful numbers  
    'Life is but an empty dream!'  
For the soul is dead that slumbers  
    And things are not what they seem."

Yes, let us with the great Psalmist, greater than Longfellow, blend our hearts in the thought of the greater *Psalm of Life* as we pray: "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me."

# XIII

## RELIGION

CORNELIUS WOELFKIN, D. D.

*"I know . . . and am persuaded."*—II TIMOTHY 1:12.

N OBLE, heroic and effective lives must ever challenge the interest of thinking minds. To explore the motives that underlie the activities of successful heroes is always fascinating work. The lure of curiosity invests every inquiry, and with eagerness we wait for some word to fall from their lips that will give us a clue to the maze of character and purpose. We wish to know the particular field of their interest, and just where that interest finds its pivot. Inquiring thus concerning the Apostle Paul, our search is rewarded. The reading of his letters appeal to our reason, imagination, emotion, and will. Suddenly he lifts us into the very secret of his power, and reveals the master-motive which invests his word and work with authority. His inner soul is laid bare in these words, "I am persuaded," "I know." To him such utterance is synonymous with religion.

Religion, Religion! What is religion? It is a very common word in language. We use it daily, and anyone can tell what religion is. But when we are asked to define it, the task is not so easy. Our vague notions are not easily defined. Sometimes our best answer lies in the direction of a concrete example. We say of an individual, "*He* is a religious man." But how does that answer the question? Such a statement usually reflects the idea or estimate, which we hold with reference to religion. And what that notion or conviction really is, may depend entirely upon the accent we place upon the statement. We may denominate a man religious, with an emphasis implying his real worth of character and integrity of conduct. Or we may say it with such irony as would suggest his being an unworthy pretender. Men advertise their notions of religion by the very stress they place upon the words.

One man's accent indicates that, to him, religion is the highest and holiest thing in life. Another man will so slur the word as to imply that religion is a sham and hypocrisy. What then is religion, and is it really worth while? We derive our first impression of religion from friends and neighbours who practice certain rites which we are taught are religion. Attendance at church services, forms of worship, exercises of prayer, reading sacred literatures, and benevolent judgments and actions—these are religious practices. We

are inducted into these forms, in the hope that sometime our intuitions will respond to the practice, and so we may come to the heart and meaning of these things. Next religion becomes crystallized in phraseologies. Men formulate their convictions into creeds and try to say exactly what their idea of religion is. Around these creeds systems of theology are formulated, to furnish a mental order in the religious realm. We are admonished to hold fast to these systems of statements, even though we do not understand them. They are the anchors of religion, and should they begin to drag, our eternal destiny may be jeopardized.

For these creeds and philosophies of religion men have hated, and fought, and killed one another. It is questionable whether any man was ever martyred for religion alone. There may be a few cases where ecclesiastical courts overshadowed the New Testament spirit with the rigour of Old Testament law. But in general it was only when heresy threatened the secular interests of politics and power, that men were persecuted. When heresy did not menace advantage, or embarrass worldly interests, it was not persecuted.

Men have seldom cared enough about a man's religion to make persecution worth while. And real religion never invites militant defense. Its genius is opposed to strife. When men quarrel and fight about religion, they are occupied only with the forms and garments thereof, not its

genius. We are back again at our first question. What is religion? Religion is a life, and life is never easy to define. The moment we attempt to explain what life is we fall to describing certain activities and manifestations of life. But life itself is a sort of elusive mystery. Religion is the citadel in the human consciousness. Our consciousness has various sides. At first we become conscious of physical surroundings. The familiar faces give us a consciousness of security, while strange faces fill us with embarrassment and fear. Then we become conscious of the sensations of pleasure and pain both in our physical and mental constitutions. Our consciousness expands as we discover our larger relationships to all nature, and we fit ourselves for life by learning the art of adjusting ourselves to the environment about us. Religion is a sense of our unity with the highest and eternal things. It is a consciousness of oneness with God.

As the word implies, it is a binding of the soul to God. It is that conviction which enables a man to rise superior to the negatives of material universe, and surmount the mysteries of time and space, in realizing a oneness with the eternal God and Father of our spirits. "Religion is the soul ultimatum." It is the last, interior, deepest and ultimate conviction of the spirit,—a something that cannot be touched, and is safe in the keeping of God and our own faith. All those outward

things which we sometimes name religion are but its wardrobe, in which it goes abroad in the world.

Religion wears these garments out just as we lay aside worn-out dress. Religion does not commit itself to one style of garment. The Friends (Quakers) for many years adopted a singular style of dress, in conformity with their religious convictions. Gradually they abandoned the peculiar mode, and accepted the fashion prevailing with the age. Yet no one suspects that their religion is any less genuine or vital. The same is true with regard to all the outward expressions of religion. No creed or form will answer for all centuries. No system of theology will abide the constantly enlarging horizons of knowledge. Every generation will announce its own creed, and theology must adjust itself with the growing centuries. This necessity for change should not surprise us. All the works of God are assuming new forms. The heavens and earth are in process of change. There is no monotonous repetition. Jehovah's eternal word is, "Behold, I make all things new."

If, then, religion is the genius of divine life in human expression, it is no wonder that it is constantly baptized into newness. All those manifestations which we regard as synonymous with religion,—systems of ethics, forms of morality, are of high living, science of good conduct,—these are the ambassadors of religion sent forth to represent



it, but not to dominate and cramp it. Religion is not some faint guess at abstract and spiritual realities. It is not some venturesome speculation as to what may lie behind the veils of matter and time. It is not some hazardous hope concerning destiny of personality in the to-morrow after death. Religion is not some timid, doubtful, hypothetical, servile spirit waiting outside the veil, hoping for some vagrant authentications to assume it of eternal verities. Religion goes through the veils, resolving things in a positive experience with the highest realities, by communing with God.

Religion is a conviction—conviction of things and relations that are eternal. It is a persuasion which becomes sovereign in personality, subdues all things in life's experience and lays them under tribute of service. Religion is an assurance that overcomes the world. It is the victory of the soul that stands unafraid amid the difficulties of the universe. Therefore religion is dogmatic, authoritative, irrevocable and challengingly defiant. This is what we mean by "The soul's ultimatum." Religion is born of difficulty and strife. It does not fall upon the spirit like the dew of heaven, nor does it rise in the soul like a cloudless dawn of a morning in June. The gentle rain and the silent light issue from religion; but its cradle is rocked in stress and storm. Therefore it can stand before the menace of the years and the awesome mystery of nature. We discover that the days of

our years are three score years and ten,—a tale that is told in comedy and tragedy until we bring it to a close with a sigh.

During these brief years we look wonderingly upon the universe. We measure the vast distances of space and compute the aeons of time. Nature challenges the mind to spell out its change and decay. We calculate the birth and death of starry worlds. And while we stand upon the thresholds of the incomprehensible the awful negatives come smashing into the brain, tear the meshes of reason asunder, and paralyze the mind with awe. We come into the affectionate associations of life. The heart-strings become woven together until no man is complete in himself. Every man is rounded out by proxies who become life of his life. Suddenly there comes the crashing mystery of death, breaking all the strings of the harp of joy in the soul, and leaving us stripped and alone. Every day we face the bewildering and distressing obscurities of life,—pain and sorrow, sin and shame, doubt and death, and yet religion is never conquered by these. Its faith challenges all antagonisms and stands erect amid the gloom. Its hope moves steadily on through a mocking silence that echoes its bitter cry, and is not beaten down though the scaffolding of unanswered prayer falls all about it. Its love beats off the freezing blasts of doubt, and amid the very disintegrating forces of death it sings, "Though I walk through the valley

of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil." The very shadow of all mystery is cast by the light in which religion abides. Through the dark it fights its way with a courage like that which possessed that modern stoic, Henley, who writes:

"In the fell clutch of circumstance,  
I have not winced or cried aloud:  
Under the bludgeonings of chance,  
My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this vale of wrath and tears,  
Looms but the horror of the shade:  
And yet the menace of the years,  
Finds, and shall find me, unafraid."

But religion is more than stoicism. It is triumphant. It knows the shout of victory,—“In all these things we are more than conquerors.” The very fact that the soul can know the pressure of awful negatives, feel the sense of lostness amid inexplicable surroundings, and utter its cry for guidance, proves its superiority. And religion is that conquest which transcends all these, and then comes back to live among them with unabashed confidence. Religion maintains the attitude of uncompromising loyalty to the highest. It will not stoop to parley with anything lower than itself. It knows the divine right of the spirit and is steadfastly aristocratic. Religion has nothing to arbitrate, and therefore compromise is not in its category. It has no open issues to debate, and

scorns mere apologetics. Defense has only to do with the forms and temporal vehicles of religion.

We may debate a rite, defend a creed and explain a system. But the divine consciousness of God in the soul is beyond all these. Like some great mountain that is not moved by the clouds that break against its peak, nor dissolved by the mist that gathers about it, religion is its own apologetic and authority. Religion dwells with Him who said, "I am that I am," and catching the same note of assurance, the man with religion says, "*I know* whom I have believed, and am persuaded." Man does not make his religion; he discovers it and it makes him. This conviction in religion is the baseline of human unity. All men live in a common world, and are afflicted by like experiences, and burdened by the same perplexities. The pressure comes upon us in different places. The whole man is involved in the conflict, but the storm centre varies. With some men the battle line is drawn in the emotions; with others it is in the reason. Some feel the stress in passion and others in mind. To some the mists arise through superstition, and to others the negations beat down in forms of science. But whatever overcomes, that is religion.

Many of our fellow men we cannot understand, because every man is an enigma and so becomes a law unto himself. But wherever men arise and discover the spiritual strength which enables them

to overcome, we may greet them brothers in the faith. Men have written creeds to which we cannot subscribe. They have prescribed forms which we cannot practice. But are they therefore irreligious? It is a sign of prejudice which demands that all men speak the same shibboleth and conform to imposed custom. When we are tempted to demand such conformity of men it is well to remember our Master's rebuke of religious intolerance. Upon an occasion one of His disciples came to Him and said,—with orthodox loyalty,—“Master, we found one casting out demons in thy name, and we forbade him, because he followeth not with us.” Did our Lord commend him? His answer was a withering rebuke,—“Forbid him not. He that is not against me is for me.” Victory is always the justification of faith. To overcome is to be one with the Highest, and, hence, the brother of all who are conquerors through faith.

Religion is the highest self-assertion of the soul. The soul accepts the challenge of mystery and difficulty, and through a conflict in faith discovers God and therein realizes itself. Resistance is one of the conditions of development. Genius is a mastery of opposing forces. It is the potential in men which overcomes all hindrance and comes to self-expression. Religion does this in the realm of the spirit. Great men have influenced thinking and action through the course of history. Their

greatness was a self-realization, which impressed itself upon the history of the world.

Some were creed makers. They thought their experiences out and sought to give expression, saying, "I believe." Others cared little about articles of faith, but centered activities in works of reform. It is well-nigh impossible for us to appreciate the heroic services of men separated from us by centuries. It is scarcely in the power of a vicarious imagination to arouse the feelings in our minds which must have possessed Athanasius, when he stood against the world. We may read the dramatic situation of Luther before the Diet of Worms, but we cannot know the passion that mastered him in that triumphant hour. We may not be able to accept the deterministic philosophy of Calvin's system, nor endorse the sermons of Jonathan Edwards. We may find ourselves remote heroes of the past. But he is out of tune with the infinite who cannot rise in reverence before the memory of such men and reverently pray, "Oh, God, to us may grace be given, to follow in their train." Their forms we have outgrown; but their spirit abides forevermore.

It is time to ask whether this conception of religion is harmonious with Christian ideals. Does not Christianity emphasize meekness, lowliness, and kindred virtues? The fruits of the Christian spirit are scarcely suited to the camp of war. Christianity is not militant, attacking the world

with sword and torch. Has not Christianity a genius for suffering rather than aggression? The two greatest symbols of the Christian spirit are seen in the Lord girded with a towel and washing His disciples' feet; and the Saviour on His cross, who when He was reviled, reviled not again, and who suffering the pains of death threatened not. Christianity has all the marks of submission and meekness. But these are the fruits of conquest and victory. All true virtue must have its background. The humility of Jesus were a fiction, were it not that in the beginning he was with God,—in the form of God. The splendid poise of His unbroken peace grew out of a consciousness expressed in His words, "I have overcome the world." No one can know the dignity of that Martyr who staggers under His Cross, unless he has heard Him say, "I have power to lay down my life and I have power to take it again." No man has entered into the meaning of the Cross who has not seen behind the battlement of clouds twelve legions of angels, only waiting the beckoning hand to rush to the defense of their Lord. The fruits of the Spirit are not grown in servile fear, but in the triumph of faith.

Christianity does not run away from the world's travail of sin. It is not a hospital for the wretched derelicts of society to be nursed in feebleness. It is not an almshouse for moral bankrupts to escape the responsibilities of life. It has its

infirmary where bruised souls may recover for warfare. It has its bourse where sinners may be capitalized for a new commencement of life. The Bible does not paint a Christian as a poor, ragged, lame, decrepit leper sneakingly crawling away from the strain of life and slipping through the darkness into the refuge of Heaven. Our Lord's portrait of the prodigal is not like that. It is true he comes back in poverty, rags and disappointment. But there is a splendid courage in his coming back to the very scenes of his former life. And there is a fine chivalry about his confession, and willingness to take a servant's place,—beginning anew the battle of life. Moreover, this is the picture of the beginning. In the last grouping of the followers of our Lord we hear them described, "These are they that have come out of the great tribulation and overcome."

The Christian does not avoid the battle. He sees and knows sin as sin, pain as pain, and death as death. But his religion enables him to shout, "Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ." True religion will not tolerate any idols. An idol is something which is allowed to stand as a substitute for a real, vital consciousness of God. It is not necessarily of wood or stone. A primitive man, feeling his way into the mystery of nature, may set forth his conception in some image. He attempts to incarnate his idea. It is idealization. Idolatry is



rather an indolent stagnation, short of the attainable, or a return to a lower idealization. An orthodox creed may be substituted for a living faith. An accepted theology may satisfy the mind, without a vital experience. A religious form may be practiced without genuine faith. Baptism and the Lord's Supper may be observed as apologies for moral defects. Even the Cross of our Lord, if it be offered as a bribe for sinful living, and used as an indulgence for sin, is an idol.

If our Lord were to come in body to our modern temples He might find little in the vestibule to scourge out; but his denunciation might be directed against many things at the altar, the baptism and the pulpit. It was an act of faith on the part of Moses to erect the brazen serpent in the wilderness, while it was a means of life. It was equally brave of Nehemiah to destroy that same serpent because it had outgrown its usefulness. True religion will only defend what is useful. Many religious forms are temporary conveniences. Age and use may make them sacred. But the truly religious man is an adventurer into eternity and leaves many things behind. Our sectarianism is a defense of things behind. The principles that gave denominations birth, were timely expressions of religious faith and experience. A defense of these forms is petty skirmishing, not real victory. Only the vital is real to religion. The rest is idolatry.

Religion is the soul's high conviction and experience with God. It does not live in constant compromise with doubt. It does not parley questions of eternity with the problems of the day. It is the prophet of eternity. We have many portraits of religion in the Holy Scriptures. There is a man walking through a rocky defile, with unknown dangers threatening on every side. Yet he sings, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." That is religion. Another is cramped in on every side with suffering and trial, one whom sorrow has marked for its own; yet he confidently exclaims, "Though now for a season I am in manifold trial, yet will I greatly rejoice, knowing that the trial of my faith is more precious than gold that perisheth, and shall be found to the praise and glory and honour of Jesus Christ, whom having not seen I love." That is religion.

Yonder is another who has the courage to look all change and decay in the face, and he sings, "Though the earth do change, and though the mountains be moved into the heart of the seas; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof, yet will we not fear. God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." That is religion.

Yet another feels the encroachments of disin-

tegration setting in and knows that his body staggers on the verge of the grave. But triumphantly he writes, "Though outward man perish, the inward man is renewed day by day. . . . Though the earthly house of this tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building of God not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." That is religion.

In short, it is that inmost conviction which on the negative side can say, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust him;" and coming out on the positive side, can confidently affirm, "*I know* whom I have believed, and am *persuaded* that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day."



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| BV<br>4241<br>.W2        | Walker<br>Sermons for the<br>times 729110      |
| APR 21 '38<br>MAY 3 '38  | Allden<br>C.T.S.                               |
| OCT 5 '38<br>OCT 16 '38  | Albert N. Buck<br>2231 E 6TH ST                |
| JAN 5 '39<br>JAN 16 '39  | John Wagner<br>C.T.S.                          |
| DEC 16 '38<br>JAN 5 '40  | Imogene Murchison<br>6159 Murchison<br>1-04-40 |
| MAR 31 '40<br>FEB 19 '41 | Barton<br>3425 Murchison<br>2-15-41            |
| AUG 2 '40<br>SEP 7 '40   | Nelson<br>5547 Ingleside                       |
|                          | R- 1805  |
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